

St. Stephen School

Student/Parent Handbook 2025-2026



**8028 Bradshaw Road
Kingsville, Maryland 21087
410-592-7617**

www.ssschool.org

Handbook revised as of August 20, 2025

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PARENT'S PRAYER

O'Heavenly Father, make me a better parent. Teach me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say and to answer their questions kindly. Keep me from interrupting or contradicting. Help me to be courteous to them as I want them to be to me. Forbid that I should ever laugh at their mistakes or resort to shame or ridicule. May I never punish them out of anger or spite or to show my power. Help me, dear Lord, to demonstrate by all that I say or do that honesty does produce happiness. Reduce, dear Lord, the meanness in me. And when I am out of sorts, help me to hold my tongue. May I be ever mindful that my children are merely children and that I should not expect them to have the maturity and judgment of adults. Let me not rob them of the opportunity to do things for themselves or to make their own decisions. Help me to grant them all reasonable requests and give me the courage to deny the privileges that I think may be harmful. Help me to be fair and just and kind, O Lord, so that I will earn their love and respect and they will want to imitate me. This is the supreme compliment. Amen.

Overview

WELCOME

Welcome to St. Stephen School. St. Stephen School is a co-ed elementary school for grades Pre-K 3 through 8th Grade. St. Stephen School reserves the right to amend the Parent/Student Handbook and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified of any changes made. This Parent/Student Handbook is an informative booklet for parents and students setting forth the rules and policies of the school and is not intended as an expressed or implied contract. (Policy ADM 6.0)

St. Stephen School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process). St. Stephen School is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, policy, or personal accommodation that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings, and we will always teach and act with consistent tenets of the Catholic Church.

Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with academic or medical disabilities may be directed to Dr. Marianne Kozlowski, Principal; Mrs. Debbie Liberto, Assistant Principal; Mrs. Emily Elliott, the nurse; or Mrs. Lynn Kapusinski, guidance counselor.

Religion is required for each year a student attends Saint Stephen School. All students enrolled in Saint Stephen School must attend religion classes and services.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

By enrolling your child in a Catholic School, you agree to certain important responsibilities. These include:

- to be a partner with the school in the education of your child
- to understand and support the Catholic mission and identity of the school
- to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
- to know who your child's teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
- to discuss concerns and problems with the person (s) most directly involved
- to be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
- to promote your school and to speak well of it to others to include, but not limited to, social media platforms
- to meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and to support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
- to appreciate Catholic education and the benefits of attending a school in a Christ-centered environment

PARENTAL SUPPORT/COMPLIANCE

In cases of serious or repeated noncompliance by a parent with school policies or procedures, the administration reserves the right to withdraw the parent's child/children from the school.

MISSION AND VISION

Archdiocese of Baltimore's Vision Statement

The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore nurture and sustain the God-given gifts of every person, especially students, to be used in service to the Mission of Jesus.

Archdiocese of Baltimore's Mission Statement

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore provide a Christ-centered education that is academically excellent and empowers students to reach their full potential - spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and morally. Fostered through robust collaboration among all stakeholders, the mission is accomplished through accountable leadership at all levels, ongoing and coordinated strategic planning, centralized efficiencies, and financial sustainability.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

A Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic parochial school, St. Stephen School is dedicated to the ideals of educating children in an environment that surrounds them with Christian values. The school strives to educate the whole child spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. Every effort is made to cultivate within each child a positive self-image and to heighten his/her awareness of the dignity and worth of others.

OUR VISION STATEMENT

St. Stephen School is a high school preparatory Catholic elementary/middle school serving the Baltimore County and Harford County communities. Our curriculum provides students with the skills needed to communicate effectively, to be successful in higher education, and to be productive citizens in the Church and larger communities.

- Our students participate in a curriculum that is differentiated to meet their individual needs.
- Our students engage in content that is integrated and interdisciplinary.
- Our students are guided to think globally when making responsible choices that affect the economy, environment, and social tolerance.
- Our students work with web-based technology connecting them to a wealth of information that increases their content knowledge, helps them problem-solve, and enables them to make moral decisions.
- Our students develop an attitude to be flexible in their day-to-day interactions and activities essential to lifelong learning.

HISTORY OF SCHOOL

The seed of Catholic education began in 1841 in the Bradshaw home of Miss Stephanie Raphael. By 1851, St. Stephen Parish was officially recognized as a place of worship.

Needing a larger facility for the growing community, the parishioners purchased a two-story frame building. This became the church and school, with all grades occupying the lower floor. For the next twenty-five years, the thriving community grew steadily and became a closely knit, friendly community with strong ties to the parish and to Catholic education. The parish's continued growth dictated the need for a larger church and school. Parishioners toiled for over a year hauling large rocks from the countryside to the current site on Bradshaw Road. This work, begun so humbly with the very essence of what God had created in this beautiful countryside, was to become part of the charisma of St. Stephen School.

In 1931, the church was completed and the two-story frame building was moved to the top of the hill and became St. Stephen Elementary and High School. Later, Rev. Vincent Fitzgerald, pastor, renovated the existing building and engaged the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia to teach. On the opening day of school in September 1931, one hundred seventy students crossed the threshold for instruction. In 1953, a new building was erected. This became the elementary school, and the frame building became the high school. In 1963, St. Stephen School had an enrollment of one thousand students. St. Stephen High School closed in 1968 with the opening of John Carroll Regional Catholic High School.

In August 2014, St. Stephen School opened a new building. Designed for early childhood education, the Pre-K building accommodates our Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 classes. We also have an outdoor classroom in the wooded area behind the building.

In memory of Marlene E. Rutkowski, a 1964 graduate of St. Stephen, funding for our new middle school building was gifted from the estate of her parents Richard and Margaret

Rutkowski. In collaboration with St. Stephen Church, our community fully funded the \$1.5 million building. The middle school is part of the Master Plan for our Parish and School campus, and the first phase of our capital campaign. The doors to our new middle school building opened on January 2nd, 2020 and a celebratory Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Lori on January 5th. Presently, St. Stephen School educates approximately 350 students in grades Pre-K3 through grade 8. Though the students, parents, and staff have changed through the years, the school has remained steadfast in its goal to educate the total child in an environment of Christian values, principles, and standards.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

St. Stephen School is an apostolate of St. Stephen Parish and under the jurisdiction of the Pastor, Fr. George Gannon. St. Stephen has a principal, who is considered the chief administrative officer of the school, accountable directly to the pastor, and is a member of the parish staff. The principal is responsible for the academic leadership of the school. The assistant principal will oversee discipline, serve as a member of the St. Stephen Advocacy Team, and provide administrative and instructional support to faculty and staff. The school advancement director will report to the principal and manage admissions, employee and public communications, marketing and fundraising.

CALENDAR FOR SCHOOL YEAR

August 2025

August 25 – Classes begin half day

August 29 - Noon Dismissal

September 2025

September 1 – School Closed

September 17 - Noon Dismissal

October 2025

October 3 – Professional Day, School Closed

October 6 – School Closed

October 31 - Noon Dismissal

November 2025

November 14 - Asynchronous Day for students; building closed (End of Trimester 1)

Thanksgiving Break - November 26-28

December 2025

December 5 - Noon Dismissal

December 19 - Noon Dismissal

Christmas Break – December 20-January 5

January 2026

January 19 – School Closed

January 30 - Noon Dismissal

February 2026

February 13 – Noon Dismissal

February 16 – School Closed

February 27 – Asynchronous Day for students; building closed (End of Trimester 2)

March 2026

March 13 – Professional Day, School Closed

March 16 - School Closed

April 2026

April 2-10 - Easter Break

May 2026

May 4 - School Closed

May 22 – Noon Dismissal

May 25 – School Closed

June 2026

June 10 – Half day, last day for students

June 11 – Last day for faculty

(Policy ADM 13.1) The Archdiocese of Baltimore has a plan in case of inclement weather or unforeseen school closings:

Day 1: Closed

Day 2: Closed

Day 3: Closed

Day 4: Asynchronous Learning

Day 5: Asynchronous Learning

Day 6 and Beyond: Add a day of instruction to the calendar

St. Stephen School has identified three (3) inclement weather days into the calendar. If the school does not close due to inclement weather or unforeseen event (Day 1, Day 2, Day 3), then the administrators have decided that school will NOT occur on these days: February 13, 2026 - May 1, 2026 - May 22, 2026

Please note: For each inclement weather day that is used, the one of the above planned days off will be removed- meaning the students and staff will be in school. Please check your school's newsletter for details.

Two asynchronous ½ days, Friday, November 14 and Friday, February 27, are planned for the students during the 2025-2026 school year. All teachers and staff will be working in person at the school. All students will be working on the assignments at home. Students will be responsible for completion of required work as the assignments will be graded.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Administration		
Rev. George Gannon	Pastor	pastor@ssparish.org
Fr. Sam Young	Associate Pastor	SYoung@archbalt.org
Fr. Jude McPeak	Associate Pastor	frjude@ssparish.org
Marianne Kozlowski	Principal	mkozlowski@sss.school.org
Debbie Liberto	Assistant Principal	dliberto@sss.school.org
Mary McKernan	Advancement & Admissions Director	mmckernan@sss.school.org
Kristine Allen	4th Grade Teacher	kallen@sss.school.org
Jessica Antonacci	2nd Grade Instructional Assistant	jantonacci@sss.school.org
Rose Baroody	Grades 2,3 ELA, Intermediate Reading Intervention	rbaroody@sss.school.org
Teda Behr	Catechist	tbehr@sss.school.org
Michelle Borowy	1st Grade Instructional Assistant	mborowy@sss.school.org
Linda Boschert	4th and 5th ELA	lboschert@sss.school.org
Laura Brockmeyer	Grade 6 Homeroom 3rd, 5th, 6th -Math	lbrockmeyer@sss.school.org
Nicole Campbell	5th Grade Teacher	ncampbell@sss.school.org
Cathy Druelinger	Pre-K 4 Instructional Assistant	cdruelinger@sss.school.org
Jeannine Durkin	Pre-K-4 Instructional Assistant	jdurkin@sss.school.org
Maria Finley	Middle School Science Teacher	mfinley@sss.school.org

Andrew Freburger	7th Grade Homeroom; 6, 7 and 8 Social Studies , 7th ELA	afreburger@ssschoool.org
Kathy Flannery	Technology	kflannery@ssschoool.org
Andrea Frazier	Pre-K 4 Teacher	afrazier@ssschoool.org
Natalie Grabowski	Grade 6 ELA teacher	ngrabowski@ssschoool.org
Koren Grimes	Kindergarten Instructional Assistant	kgrimes@ssschoool.org
Rebecca Hollifield	2nd Grade Teacher	rhollifield@ssschoool.org
Debbie Hoopes	4th & 5th Grade Instructional Assistant	dhoopes@ssschoool.org
Katie Justus	Pre-K 3 Instructional Assistant	kjustus@ssschoool.org
Nikki Marcellino	K-2 Math Teacher	nmarcellino@ssschoool.org
Maureen McCarron	3rd Grade Instructional Assistant	mmccarron@ssschoool.org
Julie McMahon	Grades 6, 7 and 8 Math	jmcMahon@ssschoool.org
Deborah Mirabile	Kindergarten Teacher	dmirabile@ssSschool.org
Sara Morales	3rd Grade Teacher	smorales@ssschoool.org
Jennifer Olkowski	1st Grade Teacher	jolkowski@ssschoool.org
Kate Peach	Art teacher	kpeach@ssschoool.org
Sam Polack	Middle School Math	spolack@ssschoool.org
Christina Polsinelli	P.E. Teacher	cpolsinelli@ssschoool.org
Kerry Rand	8th Grade Homeroom Teacher/7th and 8th ELA/8th Religion/8th Math (one section)	krand@ssschoool.org
Marilyn Roman	Spanish Teacher	mroman@ssschoool.org
Kristen Tirocchi	K - 1 ELA Teacher, 2nd Grade Intervention	ktirocchi@ssschoool.org

Judy Winsor	Pre-K 3 Teacher	jwinsor@ssschool.org
Melenie Woods	Pre-K 4 Teacher	mwoods@ssschool.org
Laura Zavodny	Reading Intervention Teacher K, 1st and 3rd	lzavodny@ssschool.org

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Bob Melewski	Business Manager	bob@ssparish.org
Emily Elliott, RN	School Nurse	nurse@ssschool.org
Shannon Anoaia	Administrative Manager	sanoia@ssschool.org
Lynn Kapusinski	School Counselor	lkapusinski@ssschool.org
Judy Bush	School Secretary	jbush@ssschool.org
Nikki Marcellino	Testing Coordinator/Onsite IT	nmarcellino@ssschool.org
Rob Baranoski	Facilities Manager	rbaranoski@ssschool.org
Josh Phillips	Maintenance Assistant	jphillips@ssschool.org

SCHOOL BOARD

The St. Stephen School board is composed of representatives from the local parishes, alumni, educational, philanthropic, business, and community leaders. The Board recommends to the pastor and principal policies and practices that are consistent with the school's mission. The board supports Archdiocesan policies and procedures regarding finances, advancement, marketing, building and grounds, and other areas of corporate management. The board develops and oversees implementation of the school's strategic plan. The St. Stephen School Board meets six times during the school year.

Name	Role
Rev. George Gannon	Pastor
Marianne Kozlowski	Principal
Debbie Liberto	Assistant Principal
Mary McKernan	Advancement and Admissions Director

Bob Melewski	Business Manager
Drew Bonthron	School Board President
Craig Bryant	School Board Member
Jen Cummings	School Board Member
Janet Wenger	School Board Member
Deb Henry	School Board Member
Amy Przywara	School Board Member
Patty O'Brien	School Board Member
Tim Snyder	School Board Member
Janice Duff	School Board Member
Jacek Grabowski	School Board Member

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The HSA (The Home and School Association) exists to have a partnership between parents and school administrators and staff to ensure a successful and viable school community. The HSA helps parents, school administration, and faculty develop a mutual understanding and appreciation of the mission of Catholic Education as lived in this Catholic school within the Archdiocese of Baltimore. They also provide programs and processes that engage St. Stephen families in spiritual, educational, outreach, social, legislative, public relations, service, and fundraising activities that further the mission of St. Stephen. The HSA commits to raising at least \$50,000 per year for the school budget through fundraisers and to ensure volunteers are available for school activities and events.

This organization melds the two groups most interested in the welfare of the students, the home and school. It is dedicated to the improvement of education, service to the school by raising funds, and the development of harmonious relations between the school and the community. It is designed to be responsive to the needs of the school and to the interests of parents. Officers of the association are elected at the May meeting.

Parents are expected to become members, to attend meetings regularly, and to support the association's activities. The Service Hour Program is a unique opportunity for our school families to become involved in the enhancement of our school community. Parent involvement not only helps to make schools better, but it also helps raise student achievement. Funds raised through the Home/School Association's fundraisers will help defray costs for services needed throughout the school. All monies generated through

fundraisers will be handled by the Home/School Association to ensure proper distribution.

The Home/School Association's Executive Committee will establish guidelines and administer the program. The Volunteer Coordinator(s) will manage the implementation of the program. Any questions or concerns should be addressed to the Home/School Association's Executive Committee. Each family with children enrolled in the school, in grades Pre-K3 through eighth, is required to participate in the program.

Each family in prek4 (full time) - grade 8 will be required to work twenty hours of service during the school year. Each family in prek3 and prek4 (half day) will be required to work ten hours of service during the school year. Family members eligible to log service hours include parents/guardians, older brothers and sisters, grandparents, and aunts and uncles. Friends of the family who do not have children in the school may also work for the benefit of a given family. The students who attend St. Stephen School cannot receive credit for service. Instead of physical hours, we will also accept approved donations for school-wide and/or HSA sponsored events up to 10 hours (full time prek-4 through grade 8) or 5 hours (prek3 and part time prek4). One hour of approved donations is equivalent to approximately \$20 in items. No credit hours are given for attending a field trip, attending or sending in items for class parties, attending Father's Club meetings, parish activities, parish sponsored athletics, and/or sending in extra classroom supplies.

Service hours may not be transferred to another family. Each family is responsible for accumulating its own hours. Hours for service may not be carried over from year to year. The Service Hour Program year begins June 1st and ends May 31st. Parents must accumulate their hours and turn in their documentation showing their hours served by May 31st. Any hours not served and submitted by this date will be billed at \$20/hour for the unearned hours. Families will be notified by early June if they have not accumulated the required hours. Families will record hours worked on the Track it Forward online platform. Each family can only have one account on Track it Forward. It is the responsibility of each family to accurately record hours served.

If the Service Hour Program requirements have not been met by the end of the program year (either twenty hours accumulated or monies paid for unearned hours), report cards and/or diplomas will be withheld from those families (not meeting the requirement). Special circumstances in which a family is unable to participate in the program will be reviewed. Requests for exemption should be submitted in writing to the Home/School Association's Executive Committee for review as soon as possible. For any volunteer related questions, please contact the Volunteer Coordinators from the Executive Board.

The link for the Home and School Association manual is below:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ULei_pUjrFF-g9VCPcFjGRBr-E7XyU8K/view?usp=sharing

2025-2026 Executive Board

President	Kristin Lore	kristinlore31@gmail.com
Vice-President	Renee Cumberland	reneep200@comcast.net
Secretary	Kim Sgambati	kmsgambati@gmail.com
Treasurer	Elizabeth Veaux	ebeth1978@gmail.com
Member at Large	Shannan Sortino	shannan_sortino@yahoo.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Ann Marie Glinowiecki	amglin82@gmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Jennie Merritt	jennifer.merritt923@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS

SSS encourages volunteer participation at the school and is blessed to have excellent and dedicated volunteers from all school community groups. SSS recognizes and values the contributions of our many volunteers and understands the potential for assistance and enrichment to our programs. Each homeroom will have a room parent who will assist in the coordination of classroom parties and communication.

Only volunteers who have complied fully with Archdiocesan regulations concerning the Protection of Child and Youth will be permitted to enter the building to participate in activities, assist, or chaperone field trips. All volunteers at SSS must:

- Complete the Archdiocesan Virtus training course, which may be accessed online www.virtus.org.
- Have an Archdiocesan application for volunteer service approved and on file at the school.
- Have an acknowledgement of receipt and review of the Archdiocesan Statement of Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth on file at school.
- Wear an electronically created identification badge from the Raptor system when volunteering during the school day at SSS.

Substitutes and volunteers who regularly assist in the classrooms must also have fingerprinting completed and on file in the school office. Mrs. Shannon Anoaia has the information on how to complete the fingerprinting process.

All persons entering the school must enter through the main lobby doors near the school office. All visitors must first sign in, wear an identification badge during their visits, and sign out before departure.

FATHERS' CLUB

This group of dedicated and enthusiastic fathers work together to support the school through volunteer efforts and financial contributions. They commit to raising at least \$20,000 per year in a cash donation towards the school's budget and at least \$20,000 of items and upgrades to enhance the learning experience of students at St. Stephen School. The Fathers' Club also sponsors several events throughout the school year.

President	Derek Basignani	derek.basignani@gmail.com
Vice-President	Kurt Felmar	kurt@baltimoredetail.com
Secretary	George Veaux	gveaux@bcps.com
Treasurer	Nick Lewis	donnies8015@gmail.com
Member at Large	Justin Hoy	justin@hoyandhoylaw.com

ACCREDITATION

(Policy ADM 1.1) St. Stephen School is accredited by Cognia through June 2027. In accordance with standards set by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, St. Stephen School met the requirements established by the Cognia Accreditation Commission and Board of Trustees and was thereby accredited by the SACS Council on Accreditation and School Improvement.

National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)

(Policy ADM 21.0) St. Stephen School is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

Academics

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Students are promoted to the next grade upon successful completion of all subjects in a given year. Promotion from Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and grades 1 and 2 relies on teacher evaluation of each child's progress. Students in grades 3 through 8 must earn a final yearly average of 70% (D) in the core curricular areas of Religion, Language arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. If a student earns two final yearly averages of 69% or lower (E) in the core curricular areas of Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, he or she will not be promoted to the next grade.

Students in grade 3 through 7 who have a yearly average of "E" in any subject must pass a school- approved summer school program or receive 25 hours of documented school- approved tutoring in the subject prior to the next school year. This requirement includes Religion and Spanish. If this summer course of study is not completed, the student will

not be promoted to the next grade level. Repeating a grade at St. Stephen may not be in the best interest of the student. For students in the 8th grade with a year end average of D or E, the decision regarding summer help is left to the discretion of the high school the student will attend.

RETENTION

(Policy INST 5.0) Students who do not successfully complete the required educational program may be retained at the current grade level. This decision is made by the principal in consultation with the parents. If retention appears to be a possibility, the teacher will recognize the situation at the earliest possible time and provide the student and parent with possible assistance to remedy the situation. The teacher will document all types of assistance provided to the student. Additionally, students failing two or more core subjects may not be advanced to the next grade level.

The teacher communicates with parents on a regular basis regarding the child's progress. By the end of January, the teacher, principal, parents, and student review the student's work performance to date and discuss his/her educational needs for the remainder of the year and the possibility of failure and/or retention. This meeting is followed by a written communication to the parents reviewing the content of the meeting, including the educational plan. The teacher continues to provide all assistance possible and maintains contact with parents and the administration. By the last trimester, the retention decision must be communicated to the family as well as the associate superintendent.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students in 8th grade who successfully complete the course of study as outlined by the Archdiocese of Baltimore will be awarded a diploma at the end of the school year. An 8th grade student must be in good academic, financial, and behavioral standing in order to participate in the end of the year graduation activities. The school administration reserves the right to prohibit attendance by any student who has not fulfilled all requirements and/or not demonstrated acceptable behavior.

HONOR ROLL FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-8

All Archdiocesan schools shall honor academic achievement with an Honor Roll based on specific criteria. The purpose is to recognize and encourage high academic achievement and positive contributions to the learning environment in accordance with the values of the Catholic archdiocese. Students in grades 6-8 who demonstrate high academic achievement and who positively impact the learning environment are placed on Honor Roll based on the following criteria:

Principal's Honor Roll – All A's and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time

Second Honors – all A's and B's (more A's than B's) and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time

Assessment Programs

Standardized Testing

(Policy INST 3.1) All Archdiocesan schools administer the achievement test designated by the Department of Catholic Schools in prescribed grades.

Pre-Kindergarten 3, Pre-Kindergarten 4, and Kindergarten Students

(Policy ADM 3.1) Pre-kindergarten 3, Pre-kindergarten 4, and Kindergarten students are administered the BRIGANCE developmental screening in the fall and/or spring.

Elementary Students

(Policy INST 3.2) Elementary school students in grades 2-8 are administered the NWEA MAP Assessment three times a year to measure growth. Grades 3, 5, and 7 also take the Science Assessment each Spring. Parents are given feedback about their child's performance at the end of each trimester.

Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education (ACRE)

(Policy INST 3.3) All students in grades 5, 8, 9 and 12 are given the ACRE (Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education) the spring of each school year. This assessment gives information for growth to each school as it assesses how well the religious education program is forming Christian disciples. ACRE is a school assessment; therefore no individual student scores are obtained from the assessment.

Curriculum & Grading

INSTRUCTION

(Policy INST 2.0; INST 2.2; INST 2.3; INST 2.4) St. Stephen School follows the Archdiocesan Curriculum standards, instructional minutes and the regulations of the Maryland State Department of Education for non-public schools. Courses are updated on a rotating basis every 5 years. The Archdiocesan curriculum is based on National and State Standards while infusing the richness of Catholic Identity throughout all the curricular areas. Programs are developmentally appropriate, student centered, focus on the development of the whole child, and challenge students to continued excellence. Specific areas of curriculum are reviewed and updated each year to ensure timely and relevant standards.

<https://sites.google.com/archbaltschools.org/curriculum-parent-portal?usp=sharing>

Students in grades Pre-K - 8 participate in Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Physical Education, Spanish, Music, and Tech. Technology is an important tool to enhance learning and is integrated very effectively throughout all areas of learning. Students become very skilled and creatively utilize the technology tools available to deepen and extend learning.

TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS

Textbooks are furnished by the school. They are to be treated with care at all times. Students are responsible for the condition of the books used. Lost or damaged books must be paid for and replaced immediately. All textbooks will be collected at the end of the year. Consumable materials become the property of the students. It is important to remember that textbooks are only one resource. Technology software and hardware are provided by the school. St. Stephen uses multiple materials to present information and teach necessary skills to students. Subscriptions to online educational sites enhance lessons, provide student practice, and support inquiry based learning.

The following subjects are included in the curriculum, listed with the corresponding textbooks and resources. Additionally, chapter books will be required in grades 1 - 8 with the purchase of these books coming through your child's FACTS account throughout the year or the choice of the family to purchase on their own.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Title and Publisher</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<i>Religion</i>	<i>Blest are We, RCL/Benziger</i> <i>Growing with God, Loyola</i> <i>Press</i>	<i>K - 8</i>
<i>English Language Arts</i>	<i>Literacy Footprints, Pioneer</i> <i>Valley</i> <i>Schoolwide</i>	<i>K - 3</i> <i>3 - 8</i>
	<i>UFLI</i>	<i>K - 2</i>
	<i>Voyages in English, Loyola</i> <i>Press</i>	<i>3-8</i>
	<i>Vocabulary Workshop,</i> <i>Sadlier</i>	<i>2 - 8</i>
	<i>IXL.com</i>	<i>2 - 8</i>
<i>Handwriting</i>	<i>D'Nealian, Savaas</i>	<i>K - 5</i>
<i>Social Studies</i>	<i>Studies Weekly</i>	<i>K - 5</i>
	<i>World History, Houghton</i> <i>Mifflin</i>	<i>6</i>
	<i>World Geography, Houghton</i> <i>Mifflin</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>United States History,</i>	<i>8</i>

	<i>Houghton Mifflin</i>	
<i>Science</i>	<i>Studies Weekly</i>	<i>K - 5</i>
	<i>Mystery Science</i>	<i>K - 5</i>
	<i>Earth Science, Life Science and Physical Science books</i>	<i>6 - 8</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>Sadlier</i>	<i>K - 5</i>
	<i>Houghton Mifflin Harcourt</i>	<i>6 - 8</i>
	<i>IXL.com</i>	<i>2 - 8</i>

Comprehensive examination and cumulative projects may be undertaken in academic subjects in middle school.

Teachers will NOT provide extra credit assignments to students to make up for missed work throughout the trimester. Students must remain current with all assignments. Extra credit can be given for enrichment or extended learning purposes only.

HOMEWORK

Home study is a necessary part of each student's individual educational program. Each student is expected to spend time in addition to scheduled class instruction to achieve satisfactory work. Students in grades 2 - 8 will be given a homework planner to use for copying down homework assignments. Younger grades use different forms of communicating homework to families. Through homework, the faculty pledges to assign authentic, intentional, and age appropriate opportunities to enhance instruction. Students should expect to be assigned homework that can be completed independently within the following time frame:

Grades K - 2 with 10 - 30 minutes
 Grades 3 - 5 with 30 - 60 minutes
 Grades 6 - 8 with 60 - 90 minutes

HONOR CODE

All students are required to complete assignments that are their own. A student may ask for help but may not copy or plagiarize another's work. Older students are required to sign an Honor Pledge after receiving instruction regarding plagiarism.

The honor code for St. Stephen reads as, "I pledge that I did not give or receive any unauthorized help on this assignment or assessment and that all my work is my own."

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

As a student of St. Stephen School, we uphold the principles of academic integrity and pledge to maintain the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct in all academic endeavors. We understand the importance of original thought, proper citation, and responsible use of information, and we are committed to avoiding all forms of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaboration with other individuals and/or technology driven platforms. Please see the “Academic Integrity Acknowledgement Form” at the back of this handbook. A parent and student signature is required.

GRADING POLICY

(Policy INST 2.0; INST 3.9; INST 4.0) All archdiocesan K-8 schools shall follow this grading policy to ensure consistent, transparent, and fair grading of students' academic performance. The purpose is to ensure consistent, transparent grading practices that accurately reflect students' academic performance and mastery of the curriculum.

OVERVIEW OF GRADING AND REPORTING

Grades serve as a tool to measure and communicate a student's academic performance and mastery of the curriculum. They provide valuable feedback to students, parents, and educators about the student's understanding of the material, areas of strength, and areas needing improvement. Grades help guide instructional decisions, support student learning, and ensure accountability in the educational process. By reflecting academic achievement, grades aim to motivate students to strive for excellence and foster a culture of continuous learning and growth.

Kindergarten – Grade 2 Grading

In Kindergarten through Grade 2, grading is standards-based and reflects students' developmental readiness and progression toward mastery. The focus is on growth, skill acquisition, and demonstration of understanding through developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Progress is reported using performance levels. (Consistently Developing, Making Progress, Support Needed, and Not Assessed at this time).

Trimester Grade Key Grades K-2, Subject Area Standards and Learning Skills/Behaviors/Work Habits	
Consistently Developing (CD) 93-100%	The student has mastered the standard and requires no support.
Making Progress (MP) 75-92%	The student is making progress towards mastering the standards, requiring some support.
Support Needed (SN) 74% and below	The student is approaching the standards, still requiring significant support.

NA	This content has not yet been assessed.
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ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Assessment methods may include: teacher observation, classwork and student discussions, work samples and portfolios, checklists and rubrics aligned to standards, formal quizzes and tests.

Formal quizzes and tests may be administered in developmentally appropriate ways to assess student understanding. While traditional numerical weighting is not applied in Grades K-2, assessment results are used to inform instructional decisions and report progress toward grade-level students.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Participation, engagement, and skill demonstration are used to assess subjects like Art, Music, and Physical Education.

BEHAVIOR

Behavior is reported separately and is not factored into academic performance indicators.

Grades 3-8 Grading

COMPONENTS OF GRADING

Grades should primarily reflect the student's academic mastery of the subject content. schools will determine the category weighting within these ranges and will communicate school-specific grading practices.

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (60%)

This category will represent the student's mastery of core subject content.

- **Classwork:** Assignments completed during class that show understanding of the material. These assignments should be graded for accuracy, comprehension, and depth of thought.
- **Practice Activities:** These include tasks that help reinforce learning, such as drills, exercises, and review activities. These activities should be integrated with class content and help students solidify their understanding.
- **Tests and Quizzes:** Frequent quizzes and formal tests will assess student retention and comprehension of key concepts. Quizzes assess smaller chunks of content, while tests cover larger units or major concepts. Tests will weigh heavily in this category, given their comprehensive nature.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING (20%)

This category includes more formal assessments such as larger tests and projects that evaluate how well students have mastered the material.

- **Projects:** Assignments that require students to apply learned concepts in more complex, real-world situations. These projects should be assessed on both the process (e.g., research, organization) and the final product (e.g., depth of analysis, creativity).
- **Major Tests:** These will account for a significant portion of this category, reflecting a student's overall understanding of unit content. There are no test retakes unless the entire class averages a score of 69% or lower, which indicates reteaching is necessary.

SKILLS APPLICATION AND CRITICAL THINKING (15%)

This category assesses how students apply their learning in complex or real-world contexts. It encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, going beyond simple recall of facts.

- **Problem-Solving Assignments:** These include tasks where students need to analyze, synthesize, and apply learned concepts to new or unfamiliar situations. Examples include science experiments, math problems requiring creative solutions, or essay questions that ask students to analyze a situation.
- **Critical Thinking Projects:** These might include essays, presentations, or research projects that require students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

HOMEWORK AND PRACTICE (5%)

Homework and in-class activities should provide students with opportunities to reinforce and apply skills and concepts that have already been taught. Homework completed outside of school should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and should not introduce new content.

Practice activities, completed during the school day, such as exit tickets, fluency drills, or review exercises, support ongoing learning and skill development. Both contribute to a deeper understanding of the material.

Homework: Homework assignments will be graded for completion and may be graded for accuracy if the learning concepts are previously taught concepts. These assignments should provide students with opportunities to practice and review the content discussed in class.

Practice Assignments: Practice assignments structured tasks completed during class that reinforce previously taught concepts. These may include exit tickets, spelling tests, math fact drills, or other review activities that support skill development and content retention.

BEHAVIOR

Behavior should not be included in academic grades. It is essential that grades accurately reflect a student's academic performance, rather than their behavior.

Subjects and Activities Requiring Participation

There are courses and activities in which demonstration of mastery through participation is the only way to assess skills and application. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Art:** Active participation in art projects, critiques, and exhibitions is necessary to showcase artistic abilities.
- **Class Discussion:** Engaging in class discussions helps demonstrate understanding and the ability to articulate thoughts clearly.
- **Physical Education:** Participating in physical activities, sports, and fitness assessments is crucial for demonstrating physical skills and fitness levels.

Participation in these activities may be graded according to expectations for the course or activity. This ensures that students are actively engaged and effectively demonstrate their level of mastery.

Weighting of Grading Categories

Category	Weighting (%)
Content Knowledge (Classwork, Practice Activities, Tests, Quizzes)	60%
Assessments of Learning (Major Tests, Projects)	20%
Skills Application and Critical Thinking (Projects, Problem-Solving)	15%
Homework/Practice Activities (Practice Activities, Review)	5%

Trimester Grade Key Grades 3-8	
A+	97-100
A	93-96
B+	89-92
B	85-88
C+	80-84
C	75-79
D	70-74
E	69 and below

Trimester Grade Key Special Areas/Achievement/Conduct Codes, Grades 3-8	
Consistently Developing (CD) 93-100%	The student has mastered the standard and requires no support.
Making Progress (MP) 75-92%	The student is making progress towards mastering the standards, requiring some support.
Needs Improvement (NI) 74% and below	The student is approaching the standards, still requiring significant support.
NA	Not Assessed at this time

Report Cards and Interim Reports

Archdiocese of Baltimore report cards will be sent home 3 times a year at the conclusion of each trimester. In addition, the school will send electronic interim reports home for Pre-k through grade 8 at the middle of each trimester. It is also the responsibility of parents to obtain their passwords for PowerSchool and monitor grades for their children in grades 3-8. Parents will be contacted by the teacher by mid-trimester with an interim report. In some cases, where there is a significant drop in grades or performance, a conference may be required.

Number grades are rounded to determine the letter grade.

Examples: 96.5 rounds up to 97 and equals an A+
96.4 rounds down to 96 and equals an A.

Parents may not request a change in grade on an assignment or a final grade in order to achieve honor roll or a desired grade in an academic class.

Dates of Interims and Report Card Distribution:

Trimester 1 Interim - Week of October 6th

Trimester 1 Report Card - Week of November 24th

Trimester 2 Interim - Week of January 19th

Trimester 2 Report Card - Week of March 16th

Trimester 3 Interim - Week of April 20th

Trimester 3 Report Card - Week of June 8th

POWERSCHOOL ACCESS

(Policy INST 4.0) It is also the parents' responsibility to obtain their passwords for PowerSchool and to monitor grades for their children in grades 3-8. Parents will be contacted by the teacher by mid-trimester with an interim report. In some cases, where there is a significant drop in grades or performance, a conference may be required.

WORK HABITS

Students are responsible for all classroom assignments, group projects, and homework according to the standards and due dates assigned by the teacher. Late work may earn a reduced grade. Students may be asked to complete late assignments during recess or after school. There will be no retakes of any assessments.

MISSING WORK POLICY FOR GRADES 3 - 8

The grade will be lowered by 10% for each day an assignment is late without an acceptable excuse (e.g. absence). The student will not be able to hand the work in for credit after one week (7 calendar days) from the original due date and the grade will be recorded as a zero. If a student is absent from school with an excused absence, it will be HIS or HER responsibility to ask a teacher or another student for the missed assignments. The due date will be extended by the number of days the student was absent with no penalty. Each teacher will maintain a website on Google classroom as a reference tool for those students who have been absent or for any student needing access to assignments or classroom announcements. Please be sure to check planners as they may be the most accurate with regard to assignments. This policy applies to work assigned on Asynchronous Learning Days. Students are required to follow their teachers' instructions for submitting the work—whether online or in person—by the next school day. Failure to do so will negatively affect their trimester grade.

ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS

St. Stephen School has established a set of guidelines for work completion. It is the expectation that all work turned in reflects the students' best work. Students are expected to take pride in their work by using their best handwriting and writing clearly.

All assignments should be checked for correct grammar and spelling before being turned in. Neatness counts—final work should be clean, organized, and free of scribbles or cross-outs. St. Stephen School does teach and requires the use of cursive by the end of third grade.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Scheduled conferences are held for parents in the fall. Parents or teachers may request conferences at other times during the school year as needed. You will receive notification about how to schedule your conference online via Sign Up Genius link prior to the appointed conference day.

Conferences are held in the student's homeroom. Special Area teachers may join the conference or parents have the option of requesting a meeting with any special area teacher before or after their scheduled classroom teacher conference time.

GROUP PLACEMENT

Placement is a complex process that involves both the consideration of the individual children and the creation of the social and learning community. Your child's placement is an important decision that involves input from a team of educators, including classroom teachers, special area teachers, reading and math specialists, and school administrators. We take a thoughtful and thorough approach, looking at the whole child—their strengths, classroom performance, and assessment results. Our goal is to make the best decision to support your child's learning and growth, and we dedicate time and care to ensure we meet their individual needs. Please do not ask for specific teachers. Do not request seating assignments for children or groupings with friends. With regards to academic areas, the Archdiocese of Baltimore does not contain multiple curriculums for any grade in ELA. It is the same for Math, with the exception of two curriculums in 7th and 8th grade Math.

HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND VISITATION POLICY

St. Stephen School assists families with the high school process. Dr. Marianne Kozlowski is our point of contact.

Per Archdiocese of Baltimore policy, high school visitations and excused absences are for grade 8 only. Visitation for grade 8 is limited to 3 excused days. A Google form will be sent to 8th grade families to indicate visitation days and when your child will be out of school. Students are expected to make up work missed on visitation days. We recommend visitation days be scheduled for our student days off or on early dismissal days. The students are not required to make school visitations; this is optional.

All high school visitations must be completed before Christmas break as applications to high schools are due by December 10, 2025. Acceptance letters are mailed in February 2026.

Catholic high schools in The Archdiocese of Baltimore require applicants to take the High School Placement Test. It is important that your 8th grade child take the test if

there is any chance he/she may be attending a Catholic high School. St. Stephen students take the High School Placement test during the school day on November 19, 2025.. The online portal for HSPT registration opens on September 9, 2025. All students receiving accommodations, with required psycho-educational testing, must be uploaded to the HSPT by the family by October 31, 2025.

Some schools require recommendations in addition to the Archdiocesan referral form, which is automatically provided to the school for each student. If your child applies to a school that requires a separate recommendation, please submit this request directly to Mrs. Kozlowski with at least two weeks' notice prior to the due date. Please note that recommendations of any type will not be given to the students or parents/guardians to be hand- carried to the schools; they will be mailed directly to the admission directors of the high schools.

Technology

CELL PHONES

Students are permitted to bring a cell phone to school, but it must be brought to the designated drop-off point immediately upon the student's arrival to school, checked in, and should then be retrieved from this point at dismissal. At no time during the school day, or while in the school building, are students allowed to have access to their personal cell phone. Cell phones may not be used during dismissal, during After Care, or during after school clubs and activities. Cell phones are not to be used in the parking lot for safety reasons; however, cell phones are permissible when the student is in the car. St. Stephen will not be responsible for the theft, damage or loss of such devices. Any student using an electronic device during the school day will have the device confiscated, an electronics violation will be given through PBIS, and the parent will have to pick up the device in person from the office at the end of the school day.

SMART WATCHES

Students are not permitted to wear Apple, Garmin, or FitBit watches to school. Due to the ability of these electronic devices to text, access the internet, email and social media, they are not permitted. Apple tracker bracelets are also not allowed.

iPods, AirPods, iPads

Students are not permitted to bring and use iPods, AirPods, or iPads to school. Due to the ability of these electronic devices to text, access the internet, email and social media, they are not permitted.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Technology skills are necessary to ready our students for their future. Access to the Internet and technology tools (including software tools, web-based applications and services, computer equipment, iPads, and other personal electronic devices) allow students to conduct research, produce digital content, and communicate with classmates

and teachers. The Internet and technology tools put enormous power at the fingertips of users. As such, they also place a great deal of responsibility on users.

It is imperative that technology resources be used to build community, encourage critical reflection, and foster readiness for future learning. Developments in technology at the school are to be used ethically, legally, and responsibly. As in other areas, our students are expected to make good choices with regard to their behavior.

Individual users are responsible for their activity on the Internet and technology tools, including the material stored and information shared. In order to protect private and personal information, unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information is prohibited. The school reserves the right to edit Internet accounts for child-only configurations, and to run filtering software for students' protection.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student users (and their parents) recognize the limitations the school imposes on the use of the internet and technology tools and that they understand the standards of behavior the school expects of users.

All users of the school network and technology tools, whether on a school-owned or personal device, are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines for acceptable use.

Acceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools are for authorized academic and school-related activities that support learning and teaching and:

- Respect the privacy and property rights of others and the well-being of the school
- Are consistent with Roman Catholic values and morals
- Treat technology tools and computer equipment with respect

Unacceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools include but are not limited to:

- Violating the rights or privacy of others, including by photographing or filming an individual without consent
- Posting or distributing videos or photographs without consent of the persons depicted and the school
- Using technology to send profanity, obscenity, or other offensive or harmful language
- Unauthorized copying, downloading, or installation of content, software or applications (including plagiarism or "pirating" music)
- Sending false information or sending messages to the school community that fail to identify the sender (including anonymous messages or messages using a pseudonym)
- Using any program designed to disrupt network performance or breach network security, such as software designed to capture passwords or break encryption protocols
- Revealing personal information beyond what is required for login while using

Internet or web-based resources

- Responding to inappropriate messages from others (which should be reported to the school)
- Downloading or copying information without prior teacher approval
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are inappropriate or may be offensive to others (including pornography and other inappropriate images)
- Sharing of passwords or attempting to discover another's password (passwords should be changed frequently)
- Using or accessing another's account (network accounts are to be used only by those for whom the account has been established)
- Intentionally writing, producing, generating, copying or introducing dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to viruses, bugs, 'worms', etc.
- Intentionally damaging, altering, or tampering with any hardware, software, printers, keyboards, speakers, etc.
- Accessing or searching files, directories, or folders for which the user does not have authorization
- Intentionally erasing, renaming, or disabling of anyone else's files or programs
- Accessing social media, email, or other off-task websites or apps during school without explicit permission of a teacher or adult supervisor
- Violating school conduct rules or the law

Harassment/cyber-bullying of others online, whether against a student, non-student, or employee, is serious, is prohibited, and is contrary to the school's policy and values. Harassment/cyber-bullying whether it is initiated on campus or off campus, online or in person, should be reported immediately to a faculty member, and may lead to disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution under Maryland's law prohibiting the Misuse of Interactive Computer Service ("Grace's Law").

Parents are responsible for:

- Reviewing and discussing this policy with their child as well as supporting the school in its enforcement
- Partnering with the school in monitoring their child's technology use
- Modeling appropriate Internet behaviors for their child
- Reporting any concerns regarding this policy or their child's use of the Internet or technology tools to school personnel.

Failure to adhere to the policy guidelines may result in a revocation of a student's Internet access and other technology privileges and disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

(Policy ADM 29.0; INST 7.0) Principals must ensure staff and students in the Archdiocese of Baltimore use generative artificial intelligence (AI) in an ethical and responsible

manner, following all policy guidelines listed below.

Student Use

- PreK–Grade 7 are not permitted to use *generative* artificial intelligence (AI) at this time.
- Grade 8 may be permitted to use *generative* artificial intelligence (AI) for academic purposes **only** during teacher-directed instruction in the classroom, but not until the second trimester.

Privacy and Safety

- Any user of generative artificial intelligence (AI) must protect student, parent, teacher, and school data by never sharing private information, including but not limited to student names, grades, SAP (Student Accommodation Plan) details, or any other personally identifiable information (PII).

Misinformation and Potential Bias

- Staff and students must not assume that all AI-generated content is accurate or appropriate to share and must be fact-checked for misinformation and potential bias.
- All staff must carefully review AI-generated content before using it in lessons, parent communications, or content generation.

WEB-BASED SERVICES

The school uses Google Apps for Education as well as other web-based education tools, sites, and services (“web-based services”) to provide students with important web-based educational experiences and enhanced opportunities to communicate and share collaboratively with one another. As part of students’ use of web-based services, certain educational records may be created, collected, or stored. Directory information, such as a child’s name, email address, grade/age, and enrollment status, may also be shared with web-based services. The school may access, monitor, and review children’s use of web-based services and Internet use and children shall not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any communications or activities through such services. Use of web-based services is for educational purposes only and subject to the conduct and acceptable use guidelines set forth in this Handbook. A list of the school’s web-based services and corresponding privacy policies are available upon request. By enrolling a child in the school, the parent consents to the child’s participation in the school’s academic activities and programs, including the child’s use of and access to web-based services as described in this paragraph. In order to withhold or withdraw consent for the use of web-based services, parents must contact the school principal in writing.

Safety

EMERGENCY PLANS

Emergency Plans are reviewed and updated annually. St. Stephen School duplicates the Baltimore County Emergency Plan and the policy of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. If it becomes necessary to close St. Stephen School because of an emergency at the facility, school officials will make every effort to notify parents through PowerSchool Swift K12/Bright Arrow communications. (Policy ADM 12.0; ADM 12.1; ADM 12.2; ADM 12.3; ADM 15.0; ADM 16.0; ADM 18.2; ADM 41)

(Policy ADM 12.2) Emergency fire and safety drills are held on a regular basis. It is important that children know how to conduct themselves during the drills; they must walk out the designated exit in silence, not touching anyone. These directives have been given by the Fire Department Office as well as the Department of Catholic Schools. St. Stephen School follows these directives. During emergency drills, all parent volunteers and visitors must follow the evacuation procedures put in place at the time.

Emergency information is kept on file for each student. Telephone numbers must be kept current. Any change of phone numbers or home addresses must be emailed to the school office as soon as the change is complete and updated in PowerSchool. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency form, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) who go out of town must give the school the name and telephone number of the person in charge while they are away.

If there is a change in the family status/or the change of a child's name, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that describes the custody arrangements must be on file with the school.

EMERGENCY & WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS/DELAYED OPENINGS

(Policy ADM 12.4; ADM 13.1) St. Stephen School may be closed all day, may delay its opening, or may dismiss early because of inclement weather (snow, ice, fog, or utility failure (electricity) etc.). In the event of such weather, parents should be mindful of the following:

- St. Stephen School follows the directions of the Baltimore County Public School System. Should Baltimore County have a two-hour delay on a 12:00 PM dismissal day, we will not have school.
- Parents should not call the parish center or rectory for the information.

CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION

(Policy ADM 26.0) St. Stephen School follows the policies and procedures as outlined by the Office of Child and Youth Protection.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY

(Policy ADM 1.0) Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. Our school policy supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, and/or the local police department, as well as to the Principal.

VISITORS

In order to ensure a safe environment for your child, all school doors will remain locked during the school day. All visitors must report to the main office and receive an identification badge before visiting other parts of the school building. Visitors must also check out prior to departing the building. Visitors are not permitted to use faculty and staff keys or key fobs.

PLAYGROUND/SCHOOL SUPERVISION PROVISIONS

Parents are required to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. The school is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the times stated above. The school is not liable for any injuries or accidents which may occur before or after the times stated above. If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times. If children are participating in before or after school care, parents must comply with the rules established by the program for drop-off and pick-up.

All students in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade play on the grounds in designated areas between 10:40 AM and 12:20 PM. Supervisory personnel consist of a faculty member and volunteer parents. Safety on the playground is very important. The playground is NOT available for use during arrival, dismissal or any other hours during the school day.

SUPERVISION

- Circulate within the assigned area
- Report any unsafe condition(s) to the staff member on duty and keep students out of the area
- Intervene when students experience problems and report serious problems to the staff member on duty
- Address injuries/illnesses immediately, exercise extreme caution and refrain from moving students who appear injured/unsteady, and send for the school nurse
- Keep students from running after one another
- Keep students from grabbing or pulling on one another

- Keep students from kicking balls to excessive heights or from kicking balls from other groups of students
- Remind students to be careful at all times
- Keep students in their assigned play area
- Keep vehicles out of play area from 10:40 AM - 12:20 PM - consult with staff member on duty for emergency situations or needed exceptions
- Assist with the assembly of students for their return to the school

NOTE: On inclement weather days, parents will assume responsibility for the supervision of students while they stay in their rooms.

INSIDE RECESS

- Circulate in the assigned room. Intervene when students experience problems or for injuries/illness.
- Call for a supervising teacher or nurse as the incident requires.
- Permit students to sign out to go to the lavatories, one at a time. Have them sign-in upon their return. Middle School students will only be allowed to have their card signed one time.

PLAYGROUND RULES

- Follow the directions of and respect the playground monitors.
- Use equipment properly.
- Stay within your class playground boundaries.
- Stop playing when the whistle is blown and begin to line up at the assigned area to enter the school.

Parents are required to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. The school is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the times stated above. Additionally, once a parent signs their child out of “Aftercare”, the parent assumes responsibility for the supervision of their child and must depart school grounds. The school is not liable for any injuries or accidents which may occur before or after the times and situations stated above. If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times. If children are participating in before or after school care, parents must comply with the rules established by the program for drop-off and pick-up.

St. Stephen School grounds are closed during regular school hours. In order to ensure a safe environment for your child, all school doors will remain locked during the day. On rainy days or severely cold days, the doors by the gym will be open until 8:05 AM. All visitors must report to the office before visiting other parts of the building or campus. Dogs are not permitted on the school parking lot.

TOBACCO AND DRUGS

(Policy ADM 15.0; ADM 41.0) St. Stephen School is a tobacco-free and drug-free workplace.

FEDERAL DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ACT'S APPLICABILITY TO CANNABIS USE IN SCHOOLS

There have been significant legislative changes at the state level around the use of cannabis in recent years. This year, the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation that will allow individuals 21 and older to purchase cannabis products legally from a licensed dispensary, beginning on July 1, 2023. However, it is important to keep in mind that, despite these changes, cannabis continues to be classified as a Schedule 1 controlled substance under federal law, and its use remains illegal under federal law.

The policies and regulations set forth by the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act apply directly to the use of cannabis in schools, including childcare facilities located in schools, even if such use might be permitted under State law. All employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors are required to comply with this law and may not distribute, possess, use, or be under the influence of cannabis while in schools or during working hours, including but not limited to while transporting students or attending school-sponsored activities.

Partnership and Communication with Parents

COMMUNICATIONS TO PARENTS

In the best interest of students, the school welcomes and encourages communication between parents and teachers. Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the concern should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Please contact your child's teacher directly by email or phone to schedule a mutually convenient time to meet. Faculty and staff members will respond to emails and calls within 48 hours on business days. Faculty and staff members are not required to respond to emails and calls during the evening or over the weekend. Due to teachers' focus on instruction during the school day, immediate responses to emails will not occur. If there is an emergency during school hours, please call the school office and they can relay any important information directly to the teacher.

(Policy ADM 4.1) Parents whose phone numbers are unlisted must give the school either the unlisted number or a number where the parent(s) can be reached. It is essential that the school have this information in case of an emergency. It will be kept in the strictest confidence. Any change of phone number or home address is to be given to the school office and homeroom teacher immediately.

Out of consideration for the personal family time of the teachers and administration as well as the need for professionalism, phone calls, texts and social media as a means of communication are not permitted. This also includes Facebook Messenger. Faculty are instructed to not respond via these communication avenues.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

(Policy ADM 4.1; ADM 5.3; ADM 5.4) Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Non-custodial parents are welcome to review their child's records unless there is a court order or legal agreement prohibiting such access. The school may notify the custodial parent of a request to review records. St. Stephen School does not allow a non-custodial parent physical access to his/her child during school hours or on school premises unless the custodial parent has consented or the school has a court order permitting access.

WEEKLY COMMUNICATION FROM ADMINISTRATION AND HSA/FATHERS' CLUB

Throughout the school year, our online monthly calendars are updated to inform parents/guardians of school information. A weekly Wednesday email will be sent to all families containing important information for the upcoming week. In addition, there will be a weekly Monday email sent from HSA and Fathers' Club sharing information about upcoming events and volunteer details. The weekly communications will be sent via email through PowerSchool Swift K12/BrightArrow platform. They will also be available on the school's website www.ssschool.org. Parents and guardians are responsible for the information contained in the weekly communications. Please take the time to review the information that is sent home and periodically check the school website. If clarification is needed, the school office welcomes your call. The HSA email is hsa@ssschool.org and the Fathers' Club email is fathersclub@ssschool.org

BRIGHT ARROW

In response to some of the many challenges facing our Catholic Schools today, the Archdiocese of Baltimore has determined that our Catholic Schools be equipped with an immediate notification system to communicate swiftly to families in the event of a school emergency.

Bright Arrow provides rapid communication solutions serving many school districts across the country. The web-based system delivers voice and email messages and texts to inform students, parents, faculty and staff on important and time-sensitive information. In addition to delivering routine messaging, Bright Arrow is a critical component to every crisis plan, ensuring accurate information is communicated immediately in the event of a lockdown, relocation, evacuation, or other emergency situation. Bright Arrow synchronizes with the data maintained in PowerSchool and Finals site and eliminates the need to update multiple systems. It is crucial to the implementation of Bright Arrow that all families update their emergency contact information in PowerSchool and Finals site as soon as possible after any changes occur.

Change in Address, telephone number or email address

(Policy ADM 4.1) When there is a change in address, telephone number or email address, the school is to be notified immediately and that information is immediately changed in Finals site by the parents.

Change in Name or Family Status

(Policy ADM 4.1) If there is a change in the family status/or the change of a child's name, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change and requires legal documentation. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that describes the custody arrangements must be on file with the school. Again, no changes can be made without proper legal documentation on file in the main office.

Admissions

Application Process

(Policy ADM 3.0; ADM 3.1; ADM 3.2; ADM 4.0) Students must be in good standing (financial, academic, and behavioral) to be accepted into a Catholic school. Parents or guardians must provide pertinent information, including required forms for admission as well as additional information that may assist the school staff with your child(ren).

St. Stephen School accepts children for the purposes of religious and academic formation. Provided there are openings, the school admits students in the following order of priority:

- currently enrolled students
- siblings of currently enrolled students
- the children of officially registered parishioners* of St. Stephen Parish with consideration given to length of time that the parishioners are registered in St. Stephen Parish, as well as in the Pastorate with Holy Spirit Church
- Catholic non-parishioners' children who are not currently enrolled
- Non-Catholics' children who are not currently enrolled

St. Stephen's application process is entirely online through Finalsite . All applications (Pre-K 3 included) are immediately put on the waitlist and follow the procedure outlined below.

**Parishioners are defined as Catholic households registered in the parish, regularly worshipping at Sunday Mass, participating in parish life, and contributing to the financial support of the parish by regularly contributing.*

**Specific to Pre K, the date of the receipt of the application, as well as the listed preference, impact admittance to St. Stephen School.*

Children entering Pre-K3 must be toilet-trained. No pull ups are permitted. Children must also be three years of age on or before September 1.

Children entering Pre-K4 must be toilet-trained. No pull ups are permitted. Children must be four years of age on or before September 1st. Under special circumstances, children whose birthdays fall after the September 1st deadline, may be accepted into our Pre-K 4 program. These children are required to score 85% or higher on the Spring

BRIGANCE Screening in order to move forward to St. Stephen Kindergarten. The *Brigance Kindergarten Screening* is administered to our Pre-K 4 students in April.

Children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1st. Children must be toilet-trained.

PLACEMENT

(Policy INST 3.0) Newly admitted students are initially placed in academic classes using the results of the following below. However, changes in class placement may occur anytime throughout the school year.

- School administered placement test
- Teacher recommendation (from sending school)
- Progress reports
- Standardized test results

PROBATION POLICY FOR NEW STUDENTS

All new students are given a one trimester evaluation period. If during this time the school is unable to meet the needs of the student or the student demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to comply with school policies, the parent(s) will be asked by the principal to place their child(ren) in another school. Such recommendations would only occur after continued communication and a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and school administration, as well as the Department of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. If it is learned that documentation or previous difficulties at the former school were not disclosed to St. Stephen, the student could be asked to leave prior to the end of the first trimester or immediately.

WAITING LIST

Each year, St. Stephen School maintains a wait list for admission. Parents wishing to place their child on the waitlist can do so by completing an online application in Finals site ([link found on our website](#)) and by paying a non-refundable \$100 application fee. Applications open on August 1, 2025, for the 2026-2027 school year. This list is maintained until July 31, 2026. At this time, the list is erased; the school does not keep a list from year to year.

NEW STUDENT ADMISSION POLICY

New students are considered for open spaces once their applications, application fees, and the required supporting paperwork are complete in the Finals site Portal.

The following must be complete for consideration for admission to St. Stephen:

- Application
- Payment of \$100 non-refundable application fee
- Upload of child's birth certificate
- Most recent report card (grades 1-8)
- Permission for school to obtain previous school's records (if applicable)
- Copy of baptismal certificate (if applicable)
- Standardized Test Scores (if applicable)

The admissions committee will meet to review applications and acceptance letters will be sent in January. The first round of acceptances will be sent to parents via the emails provided in their Finals site profiles. At this time, newly accepted families will be given a window in which to accept or decline their offer of admission. Those families accepting will pay a \$100 non-refundable registration fee and a deposit on tuition. They will then complete their contracts in their Finals site profile. They will be notified of any additional forms via email from Finals site.

NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION

New students must complete their contract, FACTS agreement, and school communication forms in their Finals site portal for them to be considered enrolled. These documents will become available after the first round of admissions. By April, the remaining registration forms (i.e. after care enrollment form, grandparent form) will become available for completion. These forms can be completed at your convenience but must be completed by August 1st; they are not optional.

CURRENT STUDENT SIBLING ADMISSIONS

Siblings of current students are given preference during the admissions process if space is available. All families looking to enroll a sibling of a current St. Stephen student must follow the new student process. Parents/guardians must submit an application and pay the non-refundable application fee for their intended new student. Applications must be completed prior to December and should be marked during the completion of the intent to enroll form for the current St. Stephen Student.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

(Policy: ADM 1.0; ADM 2.0) The State of Maryland requires the following statement in the Student Handbook:

“It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

- (1) *Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and*
- (2) *Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:*
 - (i) *Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.*
 - (ii) *Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or*

(iii) *Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint."*

The State of Maryland does not require a nonpublic school that is religiously affiliated to enroll, retain, or extend privileges to a student or prospective student who does not meet the usual and regular qualifications, requirements, and standards of the program or school or to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with the program or school's religious or moral teachings provided that the denial, rule, regulation, or policy is not based on discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability may be directed to Lynn Kapusinski (guidance counselor) and Debbie Liberto (assistant principal).

Religion is required for each year a student attends St. Stephen School. All students enrolled in St. Stephen School must attend religion classes and services. We will always teach and act consistent with the tenets of the Catholic Church.

Financial Obligations

TUITION PAYMENTS

Our Finalsight Enrollment Contract serves as the foundation for payment of tuition and fees. Because St Stephen School has financial obligations that must be met, such as teacher salaries, heating and electric bills, building maintenance and improvements, tuition payments must be made on time through the FACTS Tuition Management Program.

- Each school family is required to register with FACTS, the tuition management organization that handles all St Stephen School tuition payments. Registration must be completed online and can be accessed through your student(s) checklist in Finalsight. It is mandatory to set up an automatic payment plan for tuition payments. FACTS offers two different automatic payment options via automatic checking or savings account deduction, or credit card (fees may apply).
- Tuition payments begin in May for the following school year, and parents can select either one full payment, semi-annual payments, or monthly payments.
- Families with financial hardships that affect tuition payments should contact the principal to consider payment plan options or financial assistance. Without knowledge of hardships, no consideration for a restructuring can be granted.
- Tuition assistance is available to parents from the BOOST program, AOB funds, and parents who are registered participating members of St. Stephen Church.

There is a one year waiting period before a new family in the parish becomes eligible for tuition assistance. (Policy FIN 2.0)

ADDITIONAL FEES

As noted during enrollment and in your contract, all students will be assessed a textbook and technology fee. There is also an 8th grade graduation fee. For the 2025/26 school year, the fees are listed in the chart below. Textbook fees will be in FACTS in August 2025, technology fees in FACTS in September 2025 and 8th grade graduation fees in FACTS in October 2025. As you look at the billing cycles in FACTS, as well as the number of students you have enrolled at St. Stephen, please reach out to Mrs. Shannon Anoaia if you need to make any special payment plans as we are happy to work with your family.

Prek4 - grade 5 textbook	\$110 per student
Grade 6-8 textbook	\$160 per student
Prek3 textbook	\$50 per student
Kindergarten - grade 8 technology	\$100 per student
Prek3 & Prek 4 technology	\$45 per student
Grade 8 Graduation	\$125 per student

RE-REGISTRATION POLICY

(Policy FIN 1.0)The re-registration process for St. Stephen School is completely online. Parents will need to log in to their Finals site portals to ensure their student(s) is completely re-registered.

Intent to enroll forms, contracts and FACTS agreements will be made available in each student's Finals site portal by December. Parents/guardians will have until the start of Christmas break to complete this form for each child. A \$100 non-refundable registration fee per family is due at the time of completion of this form and a non-refundable tuition deposit. By April, the remaining reregistration forms (e.g. after care registration, grandparent) forms will become available in the Finals site portal for completion. These forms can be completed at your convenience but must be completed/uploaded to Finals site by August 1st; they are not optional.

DELINQUENT TUITION & INCIDENTAL POLICY

Late fees are now being assessed on tuition accounts to encourage timely payments and ensure the school can meet its financial obligations, such as staff salaries, educational resources, and facility upkeep. This policy supports the school's mission to provide consistent, high-quality Catholic education by maintaining financial stability.

- A late fee of \$150 will now be added to monthly FACTS payments once two payment attempts in FACTS have failed or been returned for insufficient funds.

If a payment is not received, our tuition company will send the family an email indicating that their payment has not been received.

- If a family's tuition balance remains outstanding after the first attempt, the school will send an email indicating that their payment has not been received and reminding them of the tuition payment policy. Additionally, it is highly recommended that the family contact the principal to inform the school as to when payment can be expected or to arrange a payment plan.
- If a family's tuition balance remains outstanding after the second attempt, the school will contact the family, communicating that the student(s) will not be allowed to attend until tuition payment arrangements have been made. The \$150 late fee will be assessed at this time and will be required to be paid through FACTS. The school reserves the right to pursue collection of tuition and fees.
- Outstanding tuition and incidental balances from the prior year must be paid in advance of the new school year. Students will not be allowed to start the new school year until the past-due amounts are settled.
- Outstanding balances also impact the ability of students to receive their report cards.
- Incidental balances, over 30 days, will be assessed a \$30 late fee.
- (Policy FIN 7.1) If a student transfers without having fulfilled all financial obligations, the school is only required to release health records and grade level to the new school. Copies of academic records will be released once all financial obligations are met.

OUTSTANDING DEBTS

It is the responsibility of each family to ensure that all financial obligations are met prior to the start of the school year. St. Stephen School reserves the right to refuse admittance to class, withhold report cards/interims and transcripts, and/or shut off PowerSchool Parent Access when the family fails to meet payments satisfactorily or to conclude a financial arrangement mutually convenient to both parties. No report cards will be issued for any family whose payments and obligations are not current. Admission for each trimester is conditional on satisfactory compliance with all financial obligations.

Failure to meet all financial obligations in a timely manner may result in a student being removed from his/her class list for the upcoming academic trimester. Once tuition obligations have been met, a student may be readmitted on a space available basis.

We realize that from time to time extenuating circumstances may occur which would prevent you from paying your tuition in a timely manner or which might require a different payment arrangement. If so, please contact the school principal as soon as possible to establish a mutually satisfactory arrangement and to note your account. The school principal must approve all special arrangements.

WITHDRAWAL

Upon acceptance of a student by St. Stephen School, the full year's tuition shall be considered payable. If a student should leave St. Stephen School for any reason during

the school year, St. Stephen School will refund tuition based upon the following schedule:

<u>Date of Departure</u>	<u>% of Tuition Refund</u>
Prior to April 30 th	100% (except deposit and withdrawal fee)
Prior to June 30 th	50% of annual tuition
Prior to start of school year	25% of annual tuition
After the start of the school year	0%

All tuition refunds are contingent upon St. Stephen School receiving written notice prior to the student's actual departure date, and the refund amount will be determined based on the actual departure date. A tuition contract is signed by each family at the time of re-registration.

(Policy FIN 7.0) A family with outstanding financial obligations to the current school is not to be accepted at another Catholic school within the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Attendance and Student's Records

ABSENCE

(Policy ADM 1.0) Regular attendance is considered essential for learning at St. Stephen School. Students need to develop the work habits and responsibilities required of all of us as we go through life. When a student is absent from school, a parent/legal guardian must contact the school the evening prior, or the morning of between 7:45 am and 9:00 am to report the reason for absence. Parents/guardians should do this by emailing the teacher, nurse, and office staff OR telephone the school. All absences and tardiness become part of a student's permanent record. Absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. Missed work and assignments may only be obtained upon return and can not be requested prior to the trip.

Students who are absent from school may not participate in any after school or evening school sponsored events such as sports, dances, etc. If a student is absent for consecutive days due to a health reason, teachers will provide assignments 24 hours after the request has been made from the family. This work will be available in the main office during school hours.

If a parent is called to pick up a student due to illness, the student should be picked up within 30 minutes, if the parent is not able to do so, they should have a family member lined up/available to pick up the student from the front office.

Additionally, any student who is absent more than 5 days within one trimester will be contacted via email from school administration. Any student who is absent 10 days

within one trimester will receive a phone call from administration to avoid continued truancy.

When he/she returns to school, the student must bring a written note to his/her homeroom teacher signed by a parent/legal guardian stating the reason for absence. If a child is sick for more than 3 days or hospitalized, a doctor's note is required before returning. This information can also be sent via email. The school reserves the right to require a doctor's note for absences due to illness or injury or need for assessment/evaluation. A child may not return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in all school activities. If a student will be out of school for an extended period, whether continuous or intermittent, parents should consult with the administration regarding appropriate support of the student in fulfilling the school curriculum or alternative arrangements such as home and hospital services through the local public school district. When a student has a chronic or intermittent health problem, parents should contact administration.

If a student is absent from school or sent home sick they may not participate in any after school or evening school sponsored events such as sports, dances etc. Students should not be dropped off to school if they are exhibiting any signs of illness or problems, including those that appear on the car ride to school.

Per the AOB policy, a student marked absent for more than 20 instructional days in one school year is considered excessively absent and may result in the students being retained. The administration reserves the right to request a conference with parents of students with excessive absences and tardies at any point during the school year in order to make parents and students aware of the possible consequences of not attending school on a consistent basis.

The following flow chart outlines attendance violations and consequences of non-medically documented or bereavement absences...

Number of Non-Documented Absences	Consequences
3	Parental contact by administration via email
5	Parent contact by administration via phone call
10	Parent contact by administration via letter mailed home
15	Parent contact by administration via in-person conference
20	Final conference to plan for retention and/or ability to re-enroll and/or ability to continue for remainder of school year

TRUANCY

(Policy SS 1.0; SS 1.1) (Policy SS 1.0; SS 1.1) Students in Catholic Schools must comply with Maryland State law concerning compulsory attendance. The law requires regular attendance during the entire school year. Students are held accountable for time(s) they are absent from school. A principal may excuse a student for a necessary absence.

Regular school attendance is expected in order for students to achieve their academic potential. Each student's attendance is carefully recorded and permanently retained. Therefore, absence for reasons such as a vacation is strongly discouraged. Excessive absence has a serious impact on the student's academic performance.

The purpose of compulsory attendance is to ensure the continuous development and progress of the child's education. Unlawful absences are considered truant. The school informs parents that if truancy persists, the public authorities will be notified.

Truancy is defined as a student absenting him/herself from school without parent/legal guardian permission, or leaving school grounds without permission during the school day. Truancy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

LATENESS

Students may enter the school at 7:40am. The school day begins at 8:10am. Any student arriving after all school building doors are closed (approx. 8:03am), are considered late and must report to the office with an adult for a late slip. Students cannot walk into the school building or sign themselves in alone. Tardiness is entered on a student's permanent record. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the homeroom teacher to receive the necessary communication or work that may have been missed due to lateness.

The following flow chart outlines lateness violations and consequences...

Days Late	Consequence
5	Email home from school administration
10	Phone call home from school administration
15	When tardy, parent must physically come into main office to sign-in student
20	Consequence for 15 days late plus a required in-person conference
25	Same consequence as 20 days late
30	Final conference to plan for retention

	and/or inability to re-enroll and/or ability to remain for the rest of the school year.
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EARLY DEPARTURES/LATE ARRIVALS

The school discourages early departures and requests that families arrange medical and dental appointments, etc. after school hours, on early dismissal days, or during vacation periods. Check the calendar for days when school is not in session.

In order to be considered present for a half day, student(s) must be in class for at least four instructional hours.

Parents are requested not to take their children out of school for appointments, etc., unless there is an emergency. If a child needs to be dismissed early, the parent must come to the main office to pick up the child. Children will be allowed to leave class when they are called to the main office. Notes for early dismissal must be approved by the principal or his/her designee. No students will be called after 2:45pm for early dismissal. If you need your child to leave for an appointment, you must arrive before 2:45 pm. However, if you need to be dismissed from the church lot for an early appointment, you can obtain a yellow pass from the main office.

If an early departure is needed due to the conclusion of a school event (example: kindergarten prayer service or talent show) please follow the instructions of the main office in regards to how students will be dismissed. If your child or their sibling is leaving early due to a sporting event, a handwritten note must be given to the child's homeroom teacher at arrival. If your child doesn't have a note and it is after 2:45pm, your child will be dismissed at 3pm.

REGULAR DISMISSAL

Pre-K 4 students and students in grades K-8 are dismissed at 3:00 PM each day. Staff members are involved after dismissal with conferences, meetings, extracurricular activities, and/or lesson preparations; they are unavailable for supervision of students. We know that sometimes parents get held up and can not pick up on time. Of course, we will make sure that your child is safe and well supervised until you arrive. Dismissal begins at 3:00 p.m. and all students must be picked up by 3:15 p.m. Attending "Aftercare" is not an option unless you have already registered for the program. If your child remains on the St. Stephen campus after 3:15 pm, he/she will remain until a parent comes to sign him/her out. Parents are asked to come to the front entrance of the school. We will make every effort to call the individuals listed on your child's emergency contact form. To compensate the faculty or staff member who will be with your child, the following fees will be applied for the late pick up for students who are consistently not picked up within the given timeframe. These fees will be billed through your FACTS account. These charges will begin after Labor Day.

The following chart shows the breakdown of charges:

Time Picked Up	Fee per Child
3:20 - 3:30 pm	\$20.00
3:30 - 3:45 pm	\$30.00
3:45 - 4:00 pm	\$40.00
4:00 - 4:15 pm	\$50.00

On days with early closings, the parents are asked to make timely arrangements for transporting their children home.

Once children are picked up, they should not re-enter the building to get materials they left behind by accident, or to deliver papers to teachers after school. Students may not stay after school unattended while waiting for a sporting event to begin.

Kindergarten students will be dismissed from the elementary school building via the doors nearest the middle school walkway. Grade 4 and 5 students on the second floor will dismiss out the doors by the hall/gym. Grade 1-3 students will be dismissed from the main door by the office. Middle school students will all dismiss from the main door of their building and proceed down the new concrete walkway onto the blacktop. All teachers will walk their classes from their homeroom classroom to the blacktop.

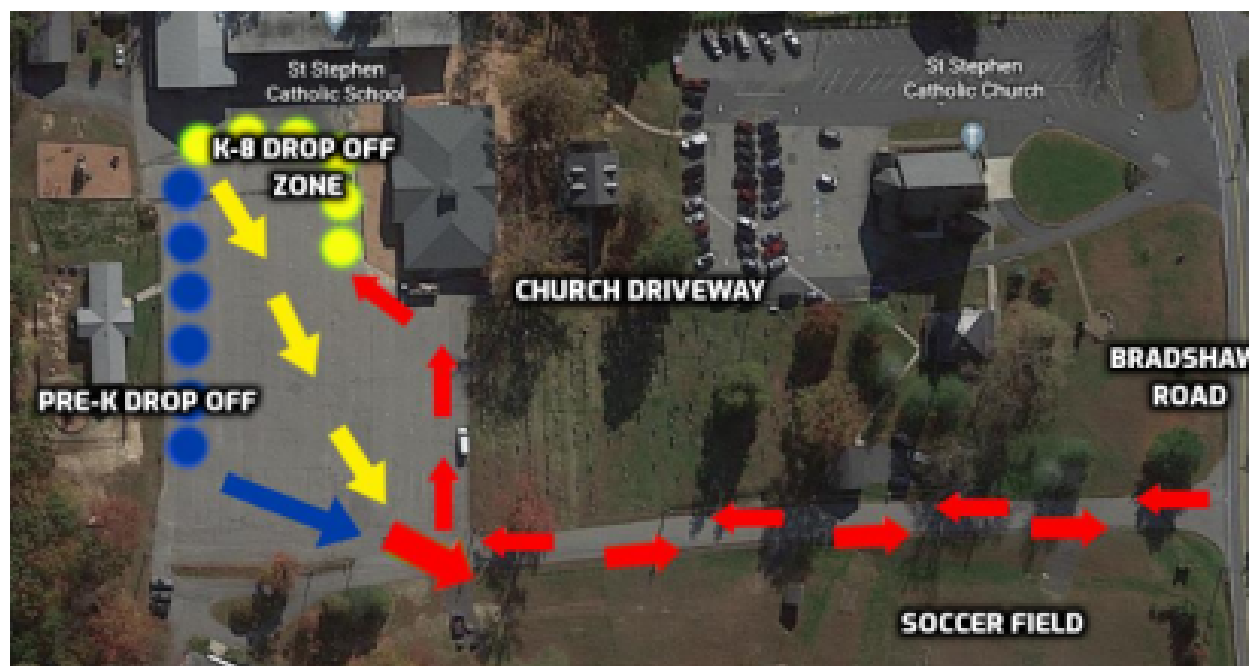
EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

On scheduled early dismissal days, the school admits students at 7:40 AM and dismisses students at 12:00 PM.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES (Policy ADM 13.0)

ARRIVAL TIME

Drop-off begins at 7:40 a.m. Upon arrival in the morning, all K-8 students will proceed to the school hall/gym. Drop-off concludes at 8:00 a.m. school begins at 8:00 AM with Prayer, "The Pledge of Allegiance" and announcements in the school hall/gym. Students are encouraged to bring a book with them to read in the morning for the time period between drop-off and 8:00 a.m. No electronic devices are permitted during this timeframe. Quiet conversation is permitted. Instruction begins at 8:10AM after students proceed from the school hall/gym with their homeroom teacher. Any student arriving after all school building doors are closed (approx. 8:03am), are considered late and must report to the office with an adult for a late slip. Students cannot walk into the school building or sign themselves in alone.



DROP-OFF

The parking lot will be opened beginning at 7:15 and cars are welcome to line up. However, no students may exit cars until 7:40 am when a school staff member welcomes students out the cars via hand signal and verbal confirmation. To begin the drop-off procedure, cars will proceed up the driveway to the right of the soccer field and follow the cones that form two lanes on the school parking lot. School personnel will direct the traffic flow.

If the line of cars extends onto Bradshaw Road from the soccer field driveway, please use the driveway next to the parish office and follow the directions of school staff.

Students in kindergarten through eighth grade should exit the passenger side of the vehicle and enter school at the entrance next to the school hall. Cars can not hold students to drop them off at a specific or particular area of the driveway as this impedes the traffic flow for the morning. After students have exited the vehicle from the right side of the car, proceed forward and drive across the parking lot back to the driveway next to the soccer field. Be mindful of oncoming traffic from the Pre-K drop off line. Drop-off will take place from 7:40 am until 8:00 am with the tardy bell ringing at the end of the morning announcements at 8:05 am. At 8:05 am, students will proceed from the school hall to their homeroom classrooms with their homeroom teacher.

Parents dropping off at the Pre-K building must proceed through the regular arrival line even if they are not dropping off a student in the main building. Never drive across the parking lot for drop off. Follow the flow of traffic; however, Pre-K drop off will enter the cones in front of the Pre-K building, and school personnel will assist students exiting vehicles. After Pre-K students have exited the vehicle from the right side of the car,

proceed forward and cross the parking lot back to the driveway next to the soccer field. Please be mindful of oncoming traffic from the main school drop off line.

PICK UP

Parents picking up Pre-K4 through eighth grade students should proceed up the driveway to the right of the soccer field and form two lines beginning at the top of the driveway. If the driveway is full, DO NOT block Bradshaw Road. Proceed to the church parking lot and form a line to the front right of the church that will circle around the back of the church. At approximately 2:30 PM, school personnel will begin to direct vehicles onto the school's parking lot to form multiple lines. After your car is parked, you will proceed to the front of the school to greet your student. Once students have been dismissed, it is imperative that all people return directly to their cars as soon as possible to begin the process of cars departing the parking lot. Students will not be able to have their cell phones out until they are in their car - **do not call or text students to indicate your location in the parking lot.** At 2:55 PM, school personnel will close the parking lot and direct vehicles into the second dismissal line.

Remember:

- Parking on the church parking lot for arrival/dismissal is prohibited. Parents may not walk from the church parking lot to find their child at dismissal. Additionally, students are not permitted to walk to the church parking lot to find their ride and to avoid the pick-up procedures.
- Cars should never enter or exit the parking lot during arrival or dismissal unless directed by school personnel or the student safety guards.
- Pets must stay in vehicles.
- Please turn off vehicles when waiting for students.
- Parents in the "first wave" arriving by 3:00 PM at pick up, will park in closely packed rows on the center of the lot, turn off their cars, and exit their vehicle to get their students at dismissal. When safely in your vehicle, follow the directions of the school safety guards to exit the lot.
- Parents in the "second wave" arriving at 3:00 PM or later will remain in their vehicle, single file, to the far right of the lot along the cemetery. When directed, pull forward in front of the school, remain in your car, and when the "all clear" whistle blows, your student will come to your car. Exit as directed by the school personnel. Follow this same procedure for the "third wave" if needed.

Failure to follow the arrival and dismissal procedures puts student safety at risk! Please ensure that anyone who drives your child to or from school is aware of these procedures. Students are only to be released to custodial parents or those adults listed on emergency contact forms. Students are never allowed to leave school in an UBER, Lyft, or any private transportation company. Parents who have students that walk home alone must provide written permission to the main office for this to occur.



REGULAR DAY FOR SCHOOL HOURS

PROGRAM	DAYS OF OPERATION	ADMISSION OF STUDENTS	DISMISSAL
Pre-K4 – 8	Mon.-Fri.	7:40 AM	3:00 PM
Pre-K3	M/W/F or T/TH	7:40 AM	11:30 AM

EARLY DISMISSAL SCHOOL HOURS

PROGRAM	DAYS OF OPERATION	ADMISSION OF STUDENTS	DISMISSAL
Pre-K – 8	Mon.-Fri.	7:40 AM	12:00 PM

LOCATION & ACCESS TO STUDENT'S RECORDS

(Policy ADM 5.1) Student records are maintained in the school office or a designated administrative area. Access to records is governed by the Records Policy.

Records Policy (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

(Policy ADM 5.0) St. Stephen School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In general, FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to education records. (The rights granted to parents under FERPA automatically pass to the student when the student turns 18 or enrolls in college.) These rights and related procedures of St. Stephen School are as follows:

- Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Parents should submit to the main office, attention Shannon Anoaia, a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- Parents have the right to request that the school correct records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents who wish to request an amendment of the student's records should write to **Mrs. Marianne Kozłowski, the Principal** and clearly identify the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or misleading and the information they believe should be included in a corrected record. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the parent of the decision and the parent's right to request a hearing.
- Parents generally have the right to consent in writing to disclosures of information from a student's education record. However, there are certain exceptions to the consent requirement, including disclosures under the following conditions:
 - o To school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is a person employed by the school or the Archdiocese as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff); a person or company with whom the school has contracted to provide a service (e.g., attorney); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities or duties to the school.
 - o To other schools to which a student is transferring.
 - o In connection with financial aid under certain circumstances.
 - o To specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.

- o To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- o To accrediting organizations.
- o In order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- o To appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.

The school also may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless a parent objects in writing. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the school to include this type of information in certain publications. Examples of such publications include a playbill, showing the student's role in a drama production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets.

The school has designated the following as directory information

- o Student's name
- o Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- o Address
- o Telephone listing
- o Electronic mail address
- o Photograph
- o Honors and awards received
- o Date and place of birth
- o Dates of attendance
- o Grade level

Parents who do not want the school to disclose the above directory information without their prior written consent must notify **the principal** in writing by **September 12, 2025**.

- **A log must be maintained of each request for access to and each disclosure of educational record information other than disclosure to parents or students 18 or older or school officials. The log should contain the name of the person(s), the date, and the legitimate interests the person had in requesting or obtaining the information.**
- **Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by St. Stephen School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.**

Discipline

Statement on Philosophy of Discipline

St. Stephen School strives to develop responsible, courteous, self-disciplined boys and girls whose pride in themselves, their parents, their school, and their community is

reflected in their behavior. The development of such young people requires a consistent practice of thoughtful, responsible behavior during these formative years. Students are made aware that they are an integral part of the faith community and that their actions affect themselves as well as the entire community. The ultimate purpose is to develop true Christian character and a sense of responsibility: to establish an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence; and to protect the welfare of the individual, as well as the school community.

Students may be disciplined for conduct that occurs on school premises or at school-sponsored events, or for other conduct that adversely affects the interests or reputation of the school regardless of where the conduct occurs.

PBIS

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has implemented an evidence and research-based Anti-bullying Program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). PBIS is a comprehensive framework in which schools focus on our Christ-centered teachings and values to create nurturing, safe, positive, and supportive learning environments. Consistent school-wide expectations are visible throughout the school and students' positive behavior is acknowledged and celebrated. The PBIS framework adopts behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that is designed to enhance academic and behavioral outcomes for every student.

S.O.A.R.

St. Stephen School has joined a network of schools that are proponents of the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) approach to student behavior. The Archdiocese of Baltimore Department of Schools encourages each school to customize the PBIS program to fit the needs of each individual school.

S.O.A.R. is the positive behavioral interventions and support system that has been designed and implemented at St. Stephen School. S.O.A.R. stands for the following: S = Serve God, O = Own our actions, A = Act with appropriate attitude, R = Respect All. Lessons are presented at appropriate times of the school year. Events are scheduled to support and acknowledge students who model these behaviors. Research has confirmed that students who participate in a schoolwide positive interventions and support system experience less instances of peer bullying behaviors.

STUDENT STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

In order to show respect, maintain safety, and focus on learning, students are expected to:

1. Follow directions the first time.
2. Speak using polite language, volume, and tone.
3. Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
4. Be where they are supposed to be.
5. Take care of school property and personal belongings.
6. Walk quietly in the hallways to not disturb other classes.
7. Refrain from chewing gum.

BEHAVIOR

To maintain a positive learning environment and standards that are consistent with our Christian philosophy, it is essential that students exhibit a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves as well as others. Listed below are some behaviors that are unacceptable:

- *Disrespect in manner and/or language
- *Rowdiness
- *Using the property of others without permission
- *Dishonesty
- *Disruptive Behavior
- *Failure to have necessary supplies for class work
- *Dangerous Play
- *Rudeness
- *Vulgarity
- *Dress code violations
- *Harassment of any kind by word or manner
- *Possession or consumption of any drug or look-alike drug while at school or while attending a school function. St. Stephen is a drug, smoke and vape free campus.
- *Possession or consumption of alcohol while at school or while attending a school function
- *Possession of knives/weapons or look-alike knives/weapons
- *Possession of pornographic material(s)
- *Smoking/using matches/vaping/gummies
- *Willful destruction of school property
- *Leaving school property without permission
- *Theft or extortion
- *Fighting or threats of violence
- *Harassment

After- school activities, while participating in practices, games, clubs or service projects, are included in the definition of on-campus conduct.

When it comes to social media, whether posted during school hours, and on school property, or while occurring outside of the school property, if it creates a substantial disruption, the school can take action relative to in-school discipline. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying and is not in alignment with our Catholic faith and values.

Generally, the teacher will deal with infractions. Should circumstances warrant, the parent and/or the administration involved will be consulted. In cases of serious or repeated violations, students may be subject to disciplinary suspension or expulsion. The School's fair procedure to be used in cases of possible suspension or expulsion is as follows: (review AOB policy 2.1 and 3.0)

While on suspension, the student is still responsible for missed work. After the specified amount of time for suspension, which shall not exceed three consecutive school days, the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet with the Administration for reinstatement. The Administration reserves the right to determine the conditions for reinstatement.

An expelled student forfeits all privileges of the St. Stephen School student. The Administrator reserves the right not to re-admit an expelled student at a later date. If a student is to be expelled, the student is entitled to a prompt review procedure established by the Department of Catholic Schools. A written request for review must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools within 10 working days of the notice of intent to expel. Parents are given the option to withdraw the student in lieu of expulsion.

The school reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body.

INFRACTIONS

Students are given infractions for not following behavior expectations, not submitting homework, or wearing an incorrect or incomplete uniform. These must be signed by the student's parents and returned the following day. Three infractions in one area within one trimester will result in a demerit. Discipline referrals are also infractions given for behavioral concerns.

DEMERITS

Students are given demerits if they have earned 3 infractions. Demerits must be signed by the student's parents and returned the following day. When a demerit is received, a lunch detention is issued. After 3 demerits within one trimester, after school detention will be served. Detentions will take place on assigned dates provided by school administration. After 3 after school detentions, an out-of- school suspension will be issued.

St. Stephen School Discipline Flow Chart

Classroom Environment and Teacher Strategies

- Reinforce positive behaviors
- Problem solve with student(s)
- Continue building relationship(s)
- Elicit parent/guardian's help through communication

Action by Administration

- Interview/Investigate
- Determine consequences/Intervention
- Contact parent
- Contact referring staff

Level I Violations

- Lunch Time Misconduct
- Cell Phone Use
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect in manner and or language
- Disruptive Behavior (talking/ calling out/distracting behavior)
- Failure to complete class/ homework assignments
- Food/Gum
- Inappropriate Language
- Chromebook Acceptable Use Policy
- Tardiness to class
- Unsafe/Rough Play

Possible Consequences for Level I Violations

- Teacher discussion verbal warning
- Teacher contact parent
- Teacher assigned lunch detention
- Loss of access (chromebook, technology, etc...)
- Submit Discipline Referral
- Student sent to administration
- Detention will be assigned: 7:15a.m. or 3p.m.
- ISS or OSS will be assigned
- Re-entrance meeting will be held
- Discipline Review Committee
- Family meeting with Pastor and the Administrative Team

Level 2 Violations

- Academic Dishonesty
- Insubordination
- Recurring Level I Violations
- Physical Contact (any kind of touch)
- Stealing
- Unacceptable Technology Use, per the technology agreement

Consequences for Level 2 Violations

- Parent Contact
- Submit Discipline Referral
- Loss of Privileges (school sponsored activities/events)
- Detention 7:15 a.m. or 3 p.m. or ISS
- Submit Discipline Referral
- OSS (reentrance meeting)
- Discipline Review Committee Meeting with Pastor/President

Level 3 Violations

- Bullying
- Harassment of any kind by word or manner
- Recurring Level 2 Violations
- Physical Contact Aggression (any type of touch)
- Possession/Use of illegal substance
- Possession/Use of weapon
- Willful destruction of school property

Consequences for Level 3 Violations

- Teacher and Administrator Parent Contact
- Submit Discipline Referral
- Family meeting with Pastor and the Administrative Team
- OSS (1-3 Days) (Reentrance meeting)
- Expulsion

BULLYING POLICY STATEMENT

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (as defined below) of any student is prohibited in all Archdiocese of Baltimore Schools. Retaliation or reprisal against anyone who reports such behaviors or participates in an investigation of a report is also prohibited. Such behaviors are contrary to school life in a Christ-centered community, which respects the dignity and uniqueness of all of God's children. To foster a school environment where all students are educated in a safe and caring atmosphere, all Archdiocesan Schools will follow established procedures for bullying prevention, intervention, and response.

Harassment of students on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, and sexual orientation are also addressed under the Archdiocesan Student Harassment Policy in the Code of Conduct. Suspected abuse or neglect of students is addressed under the Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth.

“Bullying, harassment, or intimidation” means intentional conduct, including written, verbal, or physical conduct or an intentional electronic communication, that:

- a. Creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance or with a student’s physical or psychological well-being and:
 - i. Is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or
 - ii. Is sexual in nature; or
 - iii. Is threatening or seriously intimidating; and
- b. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Electronic technology means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, etc.

Retaliation means an act of reprisal or revenge, i.e., getting back at a person for an act he/she committed (such as reporting misconduct).

Reporting forms are located in the main office and on the school’s website.

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the Archdiocese to prohibit harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap,

gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic School shall adhere to this policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.) A school is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings.

I. Scope

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, at school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this Policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual's disciplinary record.

II. Prohibited Conduct

- A. For purposes of this Policy, "harassment" means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or protected activity, that:*
 - (i) Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;*
 - (ii) Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or*
 - (iii) Otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.*
- B. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, handicap or disability, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. "Sexual" harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical*

conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

III. Procedure

- A.** *Any person who believes that a student is being subjected to harassment should immediately report the harassment to any one or more of the following individuals: the student's teacher, the principal of the school, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.*
- B.** *Individuals are encouraged to report harassment early, before it becomes severe or pervasive, so that preventive action can be taken. All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.*
- C.** *Any retaliation, reprisals, or intimidation, whether by the alleged harasser or from another source, directed toward the complaining party or anyone else as a result of the filing or investigation of a harassment complaint is considered a serious violation of this Policy and should be reported immediately.*
- D.** *Once the investigation is complete, the school will take immediate and appropriate corrective action when it determines that this Policy has been violated. The complaining party and the complained-of party will be advised of the investigation's findings and conclusions. A report of the findings will be forwarded to the Department of Catholic Schools.*

CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS

Conflicts are a normal and healthy part of living and growing. The Administration will implement acceptable conflict resolution techniques to work towards a solution.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

St. Stephen School reserves the right to search school property (e.g., lockers, desks), a student's belongings, and areas under the student's control in order to enforce school policies, rules and regulations or otherwise to preserve a safe and orderly learning environment.

Health

AHERA

In October 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings and implement response actions in a timely manner. Our program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on our inspections, re-inspections, response actions and post-response action activities, including periodic surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress. The plan is kept in the principal's office and may be viewed upon request during normal business hours.

MARYLAND SCHOOLS IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

(Policy HE 2.0) All students in Catholic schools must be immunized in accordance with Maryland State Law. A child may not enter school unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day and year of each vaccination and be signed by a physician or health department official. In the case of religious objection or medical contra-indication, form DHMH 89, must be submitted and kept on file and be approved by the school. Exempted students are to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of the disease for which they are not immunized.

DISPENSING OF MEDICATION

(Policy HE 5.0) The administration of medication in school is discouraged. However, if a student's physician recommends that the student receive prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, a written order from the student's doctor is required. Medication can only be dispensed with a written order from the student's physician, specifying start and stop date. The original medication container or box for inhalers must be brought to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student's name and grade. Of note, cough drops are medication and will be treated as such. Students can not self-carry cough drops.

Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own. Under special circumstances, individual students may be authorized by their physician to carry and self-administer emergency medications (e.g. inhalers, epi-pens). In this case, the school nurse must be consulted. All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian.

If your child's doctor states or documents a need for an EPI pen on the health form, an in-date EPI pen must be provided to the nurse for use in school if needed by the first

day of school.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Parents must call the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify their county Health Department. All reports are confidential.

Reportable diseases include the following:

- Measles-regular or German (rubella)
- Mumps
- Meningitis
- Hepatitis
- Tuberculosis
- Whooping Cough (Pertussis)
- Adverse reactions to Pertussis vaccine
- Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever
- Food poisoning
- Human immunodeficiency Virus/AIDS/all other symptomatic infections
- Lyme Disease
- Chicken Pox (varicella)
- Influenza
- Animal bites/Rabies
- Covid 19
- Molluscum Contagiosum

Children that vomit prior to school or while at school must remain home for 24 hours following the last episode of vomiting. Parents will be called to pick up their child if they attempt to send back their child prior to the 24 hours. You will receive a slip from the nurse when you pick up your child stating the earliest your child can return to school, as long as they continue to not exhibit any further symptoms.

Children that are experiencing diarrhea are to remain at home for 24 hours after the last episode of diarrhea. Parents will be called to pick up their child if they attempt to send back their child prior to the 24 hours.

Children that have a fever above 100.0 prior to school or while at school must remain home for 24 hours after the fever breaks. Parents will be called to pick up their child if they attempt to send back their child prior to the 24 hours. Children can not be medicated prior to the school day to decrease the fever. Parents will be called to pick up their child if they attempt to return before the 24 hour fever and medication-free timeframe. You will receive a slip from the nurse when you pick up your child stating the earliest your child can return to school, as long as they continue to not exhibit any further symptoms.

If a child is diagnosed with Covid, the school will follow the most up to date guidance from the Archdiocese of Baltimore regarding the number of days for the child to remain at home as well as masking requirements.

If a physician diagnoses a child with an allergy that requires an Epi-Pen, it is the responsibility of the parent to supply an in-date Epi-Pen (for the entire school year) and the required administration orders.

HEALTH RECORDS

(Policy HE 1.0) Parents are required to complete a Health Form listing any allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information. The school must be notified of any changes that occur during the school year.

INJURIES

If any injury to the head or any other serious injury occurs to a student at school, the nurse will call the parent and discuss a plan of care including picking them up for an early dismissal and follow-up care/evaluation. If a student acquires an injury requiring mobile accommodations while in school, the parents must send in a doctor's note with the diagnosis, specific accommodations, and a time frame of how long to implement any restrictions or limitations. Students need a doctor's note clearing them to return to normal activities including physical education and recess.

ALLERGIES

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies including food allergies. School medication orders must be renewed each year by the physician and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student carries an EPIPEN with them, the physician must state this requirement on the order.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

(Policy ADM 16.0) A complete Bloodborne Pathogens Standard Exposure Control Plan has been established by the school and can be found in each Faculty Handbook and on file in the Office.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) & Varicella (Chicken Pox)

Any student with drainage from the eyes associated with conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be kept at home until under treatment from a doctor. A doctor's note will be required for readmission to school. Students who have chicken pox are excluded from school until all lesions are scabbed over.

VISION/HEARING SCREENING

The school follows the directives of Baltimore County/City Health Department and responds to parent's requests for individual testing.

This testing is usually done for:

- 1.) All new students who have not provided documentation for screening in the past year;
- 2.) All students the year they enter the school in Grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1, and 8
- 3.) Grade 3 or Grade 4 if funding is available;
- 4.) Any student with a suspected hearing or vision problem as reported by school staff or parents/guardians.

GENERAL USE EPI PENS

As of August 2025, St. Stephen School has adopted a policy allowing the availability of stock epinephrine in the health suite for use in the event of an anaphylactic emergency. This epinephrine is for emergency use during normal school days and is not dependent on allergy history. It is not available outside of normal school hours or on field trips. Students with a known history of severe allergies are still expected to maintain emergency action plans, medical orders, and their own supply of emergency medication.

BRONCHODILATORS

As of August 2025, St. Stephen School has adopted a policy allowing the availability of a stock bronchodilator through the health suite for use in the event of an emergency when a student is, or is perceived to be, experiencing asthma-related symptoms or respiratory distress and the student does not have a bronchodilator of their own readily available. The stock bronchodilator is for emergency use during normal school days. It is not available outside of normal school hours or on field trips. Students with a known history of asthma are still expected to maintain emergency action plans, medical orders, and their own supply of emergency medication.

Student Services

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS Individualized Education Plan (IEP and Process)

Each student has God-given gifts that make him/her unique. With that in mind, St. Stephen School attempts to meet the educational needs of all students to the best of our ability. If a student is not progressing academically, the school may ask parents/guardians to initiate a professional consultation and/or evaluation through the student's home public school or a private practitioner to determine the exact learning needs. Parents/guardians may initiate this process on their own as well.

The evaluative process through the local public school system is generally called the IEP Process (Individual Educational Plan) and begins when a parent/guardian calls 'Child Find'. Following the initial phone call to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Child Find, parents/guardians are given an initial meeting date within 30 days. (Policy INST 4.1) At this initial meeting, parents/guardians and school faculty are invited to share their concerns, present information, and discuss whether an evaluation will take place. Catholic school staff, in particular the student's teacher, is a vital part of the process.

If an evaluation is deemed warranted and takes place, recommendations and an academic plan are developed by the public school and given to the parents/guardians at the summative meeting following the academic evaluation. If such a plan is developed and the test results determine that there is a need for accommodations and/or modifications within a student's learning environment, **the school administrator will consult with the parents/guardians to determine what accommodations, resources, plans, and school placements may be implemented. When appropriate, a Student Accommodation Plan is developed at your child's Catholic school.** The school reserves the right to alert parents to accommodations they are able or unable to provide.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT ACCOMMODATION PLAN (SAP)

Documentation to support the need for accommodations must:

- state the specific disability as diagnosed, using the most recent DSM classification
- be within 3 years of the most recent testing date; Testing documentation older than 3 years is not valid.
- provide a complete educational, developmental, and relevant medical history
- describe the comprehensive testing and techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis
- provide the professional credentials of the evaluator(s); Psychological diagnosis must be provided by a licensed, certified psychological clinician
- describe the functional limitations supported by the test results and how these limitations affect learning and testing
- describe the specific accommodations recommended as they relate to the classroom setting

EVALUATION SERVICES THROUGH PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS

St. Stephen families may choose to seek a psychoeducational evaluation through private, licensed psychological practitioners at their own expense. In this case, parents select a practitioner of their preference and arrange testing with that provider to be completed outside of school. Once testing is complete, parents/guardians are encouraged to share the test results with the school. When appropriate and if the school can meet the suggested accommodations, a Student Accommodation Plan (SAP) is developed.

OUTSIDE SERVICES AT ST. STEPHEN SCHOOL

St. Stephen School works in conjunction with a limited number of outside providers to provide student services during the school day. These services, such as speech/language and occupational therapy, must be approved by school administration. Outside providers are required to complete the Archdiocese of Baltimore private tutor form. Service times are arranged so they have minimal interference with classroom learning.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

St. Stephen School offers an after school childcare program for all ages. The After School Care Program is offered from the end of the school day through 6:00 PM. It is expected that all parents will be prompt in picking up their child/children by 6:00 PM. Any parent who is late will incur a late fee. Parents will be charged \$10 per minute they are late to pick up their child. Please be mindful of when you need to leave your prior destination to arrive on time and to avoid late charges. Additionally, once a parent signs their child out of "Aftercare", the parent assumes responsibility for the supervision of their child and must depart school grounds.

Students enrolled in aftercare must follow the same rules as during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, listening, using appropriate language and behavior, and remaining in control of one's body. Any deviations from the above could result in suspension or removal from the aftercare program. Mrs. Sharon Tenaro, director of

Aftecare, will share specific protocols and regulations with families at the beginning of the school year.

Fees for this program are paid monthly through FACTS. Before a child may participate in the After School Care Program, all necessary information and forms must be completed in Finalsite. All medical information must be current. Please consult the After school Care Program Director for detailed information pertaining to the program, space availability, enrollment, and fees.

LUNCH

Children eat lunch in their classrooms, in the school hall and outside, weather permitting. All students should have lunch boxes to carry their food. Kindly make sure that all lunch boxes or brown bags are labeled. Students are expected to take all uneaten food home so that parents are aware of what their children have eaten.

Students who forget their lunches may go to the nurse to get something to eat. School will provide a box of choices that will provide nutrition until pick up. Parents who deliver homemade lunches must leave them in the “forgotten bin” for delivery by the office staff. Fast food restaurant lunches and soft drinks are not permitted and will not be distributed to students to eat. This is in violation of the rules for food distribution from the Baltimore County government. This also includes purchasing food from the lunch vendor of the day if you did not order it for your child and bringing it to school. No DoorDash, Uber Eats, or restaurant-specific deliveries will be allowed.

To promote a healthy lifestyle and be considerate of the many allergies our students deal with, as applicable, please bring in “non-food” related birthday treats. Food treats will not be distributed, either homemade or store bought.

Hot lunches are provided Monday through Friday. Menus and ordering are done online at www.boonli.com. Since we have this service, parents are not allowed to bring in outside food even if from the same restaurant who is providing lunch through Boonli.

SNACKS

Snacks are to be sent into school with the intent to provide students with energy. No candy, cookies or desserts will be permitted. All snacks are a working snack. Please be sure whatever you pack, your child is able to eat while working in a station or completing independent work.

<p>Acceptable Snacks:</p> <p>Fresh fruit or vegetables Dried Fruit Pretzels Crackers, Gold Fish Popcorn Cheese stick Granola Bar</p>	<p>Unacceptable Snacks:</p> <p>Chips Cookies & candy Energy drinks Dry Sugary Cereal Cakes & pies</p>
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All class parties at which food is served must adhere to the peanut and nut- free policy. The ingredients list must not include nuts or peanuts. Foods with “may contain” on labels should not be served in the classroom. To provide safeguard, no student should bring in food to share with the class aside from designated classroom parties that have been approved by the classroom teacher.

WATER BOTTLES AND DRINKS

Students may bring a filled water bottle to school for use during the day. There are refillable water stations for student use within the buildings. Students may not fill their water bottles with sports drinks, iced tea, soda, lemonade or any other beverage. Additionally, students may not bring soda cans, iced tea bottles, energy drinks or other bottled beverages in their lunch box. Water bottles must be leakproof and sealed. Water bottles with straws that are leak proof are allowed. No cups with lids and straws are permitted, as well as straws with caps/closers.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ORGANIZATIONS

ATHLETICS/SPORTS - ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR MIDDLE School TEAMS

During various times of the school year, students are given the opportunity to stay after dismissal and participate in various age appropriate sports activities. The middle school students (grades 6-7-8) also participate in extracurricular sports where they compete with other schools. There may also be other athletic opportunities for students in grades 3-5, depending upon the sport and the season.

It is very important for students to devote their efforts toward academic excellence while at St. Stephen School. A moderate amount of time is required by the coaches for practice and games. Each student must be on a sound academic footing in order to participate in the school sponsored team. Students must attain passing grades in all subjects at progress report time in order to participate in these sports. All school rules apply during these extracurricular activities at home and at away games.

If your child requires the use of an Epipen, it must be provided by the family. The school will not be responsible for providing Epipens for students at athletic competitions. Due to this, if a physician has documented that an EPI pen travels with a pen at a sporting event, the parent provided Epipen must be up to date and not expired. A note of permission from your child's physician indicating that students in grades 7th and 8th are able to carry and administer the pen must be on file with the nurse by September 30, 2025. This self-carried note would require a physician's signature. If your child is not capable of administering the EPI pen themselves, then a parent must attend the sporting event.

Please refer to the Athletic Code of Conduct and handbook for further information.

ALTAR SERVING

Catholic students in grades 4-8 may become altar servers. Children are trained to assist at the liturgy.

BAND

St. Stephen School band is under the auspices of the Instrumental Music Program of Baltimore. This is an educational program designed to give students in grades 4-8 an opportunity to learn how to play a musical instrument and to participate in the school band and concerts. The students in grades 4-8 participate in weekly lessons, which occur during school hours, and band rehearsal, which is conducted after school. An additional fee is charged for this program.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

The children participate in the Celebration of the Eucharist. Celebrations of the Sacrament of Reconciliation are held periodically during the school year.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The students participate in various outreach activities throughout the school year and these activities will be explained in detail at least two weeks prior in the Wednesday email from the school.

SAFETY PATROL

Seventh through eighth grade students volunteer to assist in making school a safe place for students at morning arrival. This is a leadership role in the school through service to others. A teacher serves as moderator.

LUNCH HELPERS

Middle school students volunteer to assist younger students in the gym/cafeteria during their designated lunch times. This is a leadership role in the school through service to others. A teacher serves as moderator.

STUDENT COUNCIL

A Student Council, composed of students in grades 6-8, operates throughout the school year. The council assists the staff in carrying out a variety of student affairs and school-wide projects. Officers include a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, historian, public relations and representatives for each grade level.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The St. Stephen School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society shall create an enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulate a desire to render service, promote worthy leadership and citizenship, and encourage the development of character in students of St. Stephen School.

FIELD TRIPS

(Policy ADM 26.0) Field trips are considered an integral part of the school's educational program and a valuable learning experience for students. Field trips are scheduled at various times during the school year, and can include in-house presentations or off-site. Kindergarten through grade 3 students will have in-house presentations, while grades 4-8 will be off-site, as these off-site trips directly align with curriculum. In advance of the trip, a permission form, required by the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools, is sent home. A student will be permitted to attend the trip only if the permission form is signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher by the specified date along with any fee. No cell phones for students are permitted on field trips. Parents can not opt-out of paying for a school field trip if they do not like the field trip or if their child has already attended the location of the field trip.

If, for some extraordinary reason, a student is unable to participate, the student is expected to attend school on that day and fees must still be paid since the rates we are quoted reflect total participation. Work will be supplied by the teacher(s), and the student will be assigned a classroom in which to work under the supervision of a staff member. If a student is unable to attend because of illness, we cannot promise a refund. The teacher must be notified if a child will not participate in the field trip experience. Students who are kept home from the trip will be marked absent. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to participate as chaperones on field trips as the need arises. However, because of safety and liability factors, pre-school siblings and other school-age siblings are not allowed. We do not permit parents not selected as chaperones to join the group at the trip destination as this creates confusion and is not in compliance with the contract signed with the field trip destination.

If your child requires the use of an EPI pen, it must be provided by the family. The school will not be responsible for providing EPI pens for students on field trips. Due to this, if a physician has documented that an EPI pen is needed for a student on a field trip, the parent provided EPI pen must be up to date and not expired. A note of permission from your child's physician indicating that students in 8th grade are able to carry and administer the pen must be on file with the nurse by September 30, 2025. This self carried note would require a physician's signature.

All chaperones are required to complete Virtus training by September 30, 2025.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

St. Stephen School will provide a guidance counselor on site two days a week to help with school related issues and as a resource to families. Students may speak to teachers, school administrators, or the parish priest or deacon if an emergency arises when the counselor is not available. The guidance counselor will work with teachers to implement required classes from the Archdiocese related to various aspects of student life.

UNIFORM POLICY -

We encourage our students to take pride in their St. Stephen School uniform. Our dress code fosters the goals of Catholic Education by promoting concepts of equality and community in young people. Therefore, proper school attire and grooming are

considered an important element in creating an atmosphere in which educational objectives are met. Parents will be notified when students fail to comply with the school uniform policy and consequences may include, but are not limited to, detention and/or loss of “dress down” days. Our uniform can be purchased from Flynn and O’Hara.

Flynn & O’Hara
 North Plaza Shopping Center
 8868 Waltham Woods Road
 Parkville, MD 21234
 410-828-4709
www.flynnohara.com

Beginning in the 2025–2026 school year, our school uniform policy has been updated to accommodate supply and demand within the Flynn & O’Hara company. To support a smooth transition, there will be a two-year grace period (until 2027-2028) for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 to fully align with the new uniform guidelines and pieces. The school administration has the final decision as to what is or is not a violation of the dress code.

Beginning on the first day of school and ending on the last day of school, students must be in full uniform. Articles of clothing must be labeled with the student’s name. This applies to the school uniform and physical education uniform. If there is a medical reason that a student can not wear a part of the designated uniform, a doctor’s note must be provided to school administration.

REGULAR SCHOOL UNIFORM

BOYS – GRADES K -8

- khaki uniform pants purchased at Flynn & O’Hara only
- white shirt, dress type with long or short sleeves, no monograms or logos (*kindergarten wears maroon polo all year purchased from Flynn & O’Hara only*)
- only plain white T-shirts may be worn under the school uniform shirts
- maroon tie grades 1-5, maroon striped tie grades 6-8 - purchased from the uniform company
- Crew socks - white - no sports socks or socks with logos - a crew sock must come three inches above the ankle bone
- mandatory school shoe, tan suede buck with red rubber sole or a Merrell slip-on shoe (grades K-5 only), available from Flynn & O’Hara, Towson or Van Dyke & Bacon, White Marsh. For Middle School only: Bluefish, Koifish and Billfish sperrys in brown can be worn.
- maroon sweaters with school monogram: v-neck cardigan or pullover
- Boys Grades 6-8: Gray fleece may be worn with the regular uniform during Winter Uniform times only
- Belts need to be solid-colored black or brown

GIRLS GRADES K -5

- plaid drop waist jumper (Updated)
- white blouse with Peter Pan collar -long or short sleeves, no logos or monograms. The top button of the blouse must be buttoned.
- only plain white T-shirts may be worn under the school uniform blouse
- mandatory school shoe (grades K-5): tan suede buck with red rubber sole or a Merrell slip-on shoe, available from Flynn & O'Hara, Towson or Van Dyke & Bacon, White Marsh.

GIRLS GRADES 6- 8

- Plaid pleated skirt with elastic waist (Updated); skirt length must be no higher than one inch above the knee
- white blouse with oxford, pointed, or Peter Pan collar, correctly sized, long or short sleeves, no logos or monograms. The top button of the blouse must be buttoned.
- Gray fleece may be worn with the regular uniform during Winter Uniform times only
- PE sweatshirt may be worn only on PE days
- only plain white T-shirts may be worn under the school uniform blouse
- Mandatory school shoe (grades 6-8): Same two options as grades K-5 girls: tan suede buck with red rubber sole or Merrell slip-on shoe. Additional options for Middle School only: Bluefish, Koifish and Billfish sperrys in brown can be worn.

GIRLS GRADES K-8

- maroon knee-high socks (not rolled or pushed down) or white crew socks which come three inches above ankle bone (no slouch, sports, monograms, or logo socks)- or maroon or white tights, opaque or cable stitched (not stockings). Girls may wear tights and socks of the same color layered during the winter months. Pajama pants and sweatpants are not permitted with the uniform during the winter season.
- maroon sweaters with school monogram: crew neck cardigan, and/or v-neck cardigan
- leggings-black only

UNIFORM FOR BOYS AND GIRLS – Pre-K 3 and Pre-K4

- maroon shorts with school logo
- gray short sleeve T-shirts with school logo
- gray sweatshirt with school logo
- maroon sweatpants

WARM WEATHER UNIFORM-BOYS AND GIRLS-GRADES K-8

The warm weather uniform may be worn in place of the regular school uniform from beginning of school to October 31st and April 13th thru end of school.

- solid-colored black or brown belt with khaki walking shorts (boys)
- khaki walking shorts or skorts (girls K - 5) Girls must wear a belt if shorts are worn
- maroon polo shirt with school monogram only
- white **crew** socks which come three inches above the ankle bone (no slouch, monogram, logo, or sports socks)
- mandatory school shoe- (See above description above or picture below)

NOTE: The warm weather walking shorts and polo shirts must be purchased from Flynn & O'Hara, the uniform company.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNIFORM- BOYS AND GIRLS - GRADES K -8

Physical Education uniforms are purchased at Flynn & O'Hara. The physical education uniform is worn to school on physical education days:

- maroon shorts with school logo; CANNOT be rolled up at waist
- gray short sleeve T-shirts with school logo; must be tucked into shorts
- gray sweatshirts with school logo and maroon sweatpants
- white crew socks which come three inches above the ankle bone (no slouch, monogram, logo, or sports socks)
- tennis shoes-All physical education shoes must be tied or Velcro-no slip-ons-safety issue

All uniforms must be in good repair and properly fitted. Shirts and blouses must be buttoned and tucked in. Long sleeved shirts and blouses are to be rolled down and buttoned at the cuffs. (Only plain white T-shirts may be worn under the school uniform shirts.) Skirt length must be no more than one inch above the knee. The SSS sweatshirt/sweater is part of the uniform and no other jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt will be permitted to be worn in school.

USED UNIFORM SALE

The HSA sponsors a used uniform sale twice a year. They offer a summer and a Spring Sale. Announcements of when uniforms can be dropped for donation to the used uniform sale will be provided via email. Donations will be accepted one month prior to each sale. If you need to contact the chairs of the committee with questions, please email useduniforms@ssschool.org. Please remember they are volunteers and check when their schedule allows.

TAGGING CLOTHES/LOST AND FOUND

St. Stephen requires that all items of clothing be labeled with the child's first and last name. In that way, we may return clothing that is left in an area other than the child's classroom. Articles found on the premises will be placed in the lost and found container located in the school kitchen or Middle School Hallway. Due to limited space, unclaimed clothing will be held for the week and placed outside for all families each Friday. After that, they will be discarded. Sweatshirts and sweaters are often misplaced and then considered lost because they are not labeled with a student's name.

Shoe Options

Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Suede Tan Buck



Brown Jungle Moc



Middle School - Grades 6 - 8

Sperry Bluefish



Sperry Koifish



Sperry Billfish



Tan Suede Buck



PERSONAL APPEARANCE – GROOMING

Students must be well-groomed and maintain a neat and tidy appearance at all times. Hair must be neat and clean and natural in color. Chemically enhanced or bleached hair is not permitted.

The school recognizes that particular hairstyles are often part of racial, ethnic, spiritual, and cultural identity and practice. Accordingly, it is the policy of the school to permit individual families to decide the appropriate care—for hairstyle for their children. ADM 8.0

BOYS: Hair length is no longer than ½ way down ear. Hair may not touch the shirt collar or be of unreasonable height; it should not be below the eyebrows or obstruct the child's vision. Outlandish and fad haircuts or unkempt styles are not permitted. This includes mohawks, shaved sides and longer tops, head shaving, lines and designs, faux-hawks, mohawks, mullets, and spikes. Additionally, boys must be clean shaven on the face and neck.

GIRLS: Outlandish and fad haircuts or styles are not permitted. Only hair accessories that enhance good grooming are acceptable. Accessories should be plain and simple with **colors that match the uniform**. Wrapped braids, unnatural colored hair dye, and hair tinsel are unacceptable.

In all cases, the school reserves the right to determine what is acceptable dress and grooming.

If in doubt about hair styles, ask the teacher or principal before you visit the stylist/barber.

BOYS AND GIRLS: Stick-on tattoos, henna tattoos, and permanent tattoos are unacceptable. Students who represent our school at sports events, academic teams, and field trips must comply with school dress code guidelines, or they will not be eligible to participate.

JEWELRY

The wearing of jewelry is discouraged. Jewelry is limited to the following:

- wristwatch
- a small cross or religious medal on a chain
- one pair of earrings: Acceptable styles include studs, or dime-sized or smaller hoops; boys are not permitted to wear earrings
- one religious bracelet is acceptable
- one small, non-distracting ring is acceptable
- No more than two key chains per child are permitted on backpacks, purses, trapper-keepers, etc.

Apple watches are NOT permitted. Make sure that digital watches that are worn are set to not beep or have an alarm go off during the school day.

COSMETICS

The wearing of cosmetics is not acceptable. Only clear nail polish is permitted. Students are not allowed to wear nail tips, acrylic nails, or any type of artificial nails. No mascara, artificial eyelashes, or lipstick is allowed. These rules apply to extra curricular activities as well.

OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAYS

On occasion, there may be out-of-uniforms days scheduled. Clothing may not contain terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, slogans, writing, or images that are offensive, political, harassing, not in accordance with our Catholic teachings or discriminatory in nature.

Unacceptable clothing items include but may not be limited to:

- *Tank tops, crop tops, halter tops, tube tops, or spaghetti strap shirts
- *Shirts that are so short that abdomen or back skin will show when the student either reaches up or bends over
- *Pants/shorts that do not come up to the waistline
- *Jeans with holes, rips or tears, either purposeful or pre-bought
- *Leggings for girls unless the top comes down to the middle of the thigh
- *Shorts that are unacceptably short in length so that they cover too little of the thigh
- *Flip Flops/Slides, and dangling earrings (due to safety concerns)

If out-of-uniform rules are not followed, an infraction specific to this day will be issued. If it happens a second time, the out-of-uniform privilege will be revoked.

ST.STEPHEN SPIRIT WEAR DAYS

Students can wear a St. Stephen School shirt with these pant options: SSS PE sweat pants or SSS PE shorts or pants purchased through our spirit wear sale such as SSS pajama pants or joggers.

ADD-ON DAYS

There are various “add-on” uniform days throughout the school year. If it is a day where students are permitted to wear a shirt other than their regular school uniform shirt (for example, Orioles or Ravens) they must wear their SSS PE shorts or sweatpants. These add-on days will be announced in advance and may or may not include a monetary fee for participation.

Catholic Identity

DAILY PRAYER

Students participate in daily morning and afternoon prayers as a whole school community. Teachers pray throughout the day in their classrooms. The Angelis is recited at mid-day.

SCHOOL LITURGY SCHEDULE

Students participate in weekly Mass on Tuesdays. Mass is for students and faculty only, unless otherwise noted. The school will also participate in Holy Day Masses throughout the liturgical year.

PRAYER SERVICES

Students participate in prayer services including, but not limited to September 11 Memorial, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Grandparents Day, First Responders acknowledgement, Advent, Lent and Catholic Schools Week.

SACRAMENTS (First Eucharist, Reconciliation, Confirmation)

All sacramental preparation is completed through the Pastorate of Holy Spirit and St. Stephen Church, per the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

SERVICE PROJECTS

Service projects will be completed throughout the school year for various organizations. Details will be provided in the Wednesday email communication.

TEAM SYSTEM

Based on the tenets of PBIS, while aligning with the virtues of the Catholic church and saints that exhibit those virtues, students will be a part of a religious team that seeks to work together throughout the school day and school year to earn points. Teams will be composed of students from all grade levels.

BEATITUDE OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

For the 2025/26 school year, St. Stephen School will focus on a Beatitude of the month, as well as a saint that will serve as a role model of faith for the school community.

PASTOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION AND SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Father George Gannon is the pastor of Pastorate of Holy Spirit and St. Stephen Church. Additional information about Father George can be accessed at <https://ssparish.org/staff>.

ADVENT

During the season of Advent, students will participate in various prayer services and will have the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

LENT

During the season of Lent, students will participate in various prayer services, Stations

of the Cross, and will have the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

MAY PROCESSION & CROWNING

This traditional activity will take place at the beginning of May.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

This week, which seeks to promote and celebrate Catholic schools, takes place at the end of January. Information will be shared with families regarding the events and activities associated with this week in mid-January.

RELIGION CURRICULUM

See the textbook resource page.

LIVING ROSARY

The Living Rosary takes place in October and May.

RETREATS

Grade 8 students will participate in an off-site retreat in the Spring, which is led by religion teachers as well as the Campus Minister.

ADORATION

Students in grades K-8 will participate in monthly Adoration opportunities with Father Jude.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: Student Code of Conduct

St. Stephen Student Code of Conduct

Being a student at St. Stephen School, I agree to certain important responsibilities and in being accountable for my words, actions and thoughts. As a student, I pledge

- to follow school rules
- to try my hardest and give my best effort everyday in my classes
- to learn about my Catholic Faith and participate in daily prayer and mass
- to complete all my assignments on time
- to respect all of my teachers and classmates
- to discuss concerns and problems with my teachers first and the administrators if needed
- to be as actively involved as I can be in the life of the school
- to offer service when needed
- to promote my school and to speak well of it to others including social media
- to appreciate my Catholic education, the sacrifices my parents make and the benefits of attending a school in a Christ centered environment.

By signing below, I agree to follow the St. Stephen Student Code of Conduct...

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Grade: _____

****Copies of this pledge will be hanging in classrooms for reference.**

APPENDIX B: Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

St. Stephen Code of Conduct for Families for 2025/26

By enrolling your child in a Catholic School, you agree to certain important responsibilities. These include:

- to be a partner with the school in the education of your child
- to understand and support the Catholic mission and identity of the school
- to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
- to know who your child(ren)'s teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
- to discuss concerns and problems with the person (s) most directly involved, beginning with your child's academic teacher
- to be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
- to promote your school and to speak well of it to others to include, but not limited to, social media platforms and in the greater Kingsville community
- to meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and to support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
- to appreciate Catholic education and the benefits of attending a school in a Christ centered environment.

By signing below, I agree to the above parameters as they pertain to myself, my child(ren), my family and any/all guests of mine.

Parent(s) First and Last Name(s): (please print)

Child(ren) First and Last Name(s) and Grade(s): (please print)

Parent(s) Signature(s):

APPENDIX C: St. Stephen School Confidentiality Statement

All employees, contractors, and volunteers of St. Stephen School are required to respect and maintain the confidentiality of all information, including but not limited to, school records, documents, reports, files, financial and personnel information, correspondence and communications, to which the employee or volunteer has access in carrying out responsibilities and duties both during and after employment or during volunteer service with St. Stephen School.

All employees, contractors, and volunteers of the school are also required to respect and maintain the confidentiality of all information, including but not limited to, student enrollment and/or performance records, documents, reports, files, financial and personnel information, correspondence and communications, to which the employee or volunteer has access in carrying out responsibilities and duties both during and after employment or during volunteer service with the school.

All employees, contractors and volunteers are expected to be supportive of the school, faculty and policies. This includes on social media and in electronic communications, both with members of the school community and with the general public.

All employees, contractors, and volunteers are expected to show the highest regard for the privacy of each student and the school and will strictly observe the confidentiality of records and other information associated with students and the school. Confidentiality is essential to the sound relationship with our students; it is also a legal and ethical matter of the utmost importance. All personnel will be careful to discuss confidential information only when necessary and appropriate in the context of school operations. Care should be taken to prevent confidential discussions from being overheard by other students, parents, staff members or community members who are not involved (i.e. discussing problems in the hall or in the parking or during school events both on and off campus). Any discussion of confidential information outside the property or similar violation of these standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for employees and suspension of service for volunteers.

Acknowledgement Form: This will acknowledge my receipt of the St. Stephen School Confidentiality Policy and my responsibility to become familiar with its expectations and course of action should I be privy to confidential information during the term of my employment or volunteer service.

Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Anticipated Role for the 2025/26 School Year: _____

APPENDIX D: Cell Phone Permission Form

Cell Phone Permission Form 2025-2026

Students are permitted to bring a cell phone to school, but it must be brought to the designated drop-off point immediately upon the student's arrival to school, checked in, and should then be retrieved from this point at dismissal. At no time during the school day, or while in the school building, are students allowed to have access to their personal cell phone. Cell phones may not be used during dismissal, during After Care, or during after school clubs and activities. Cell phones are not to be used in the parking lot for safety reasons; however cell phones are permissible when the student is in the car. St. Stephen will not be responsible for the theft, damage or loss of such devices. Any student using an electronic device during the school day will have the device confiscated, an electronics violation will be given through PBIS, and the parent will have to pick up the device in person from the office at the end of the school day.

I understand St. Stephen's cell phone policy. My child will be _____ bringing his or her cell phone to school and will be following the above policy.

I understand St. Stephen's cell phone policy. My child WILL _____ **NOT** be bringing his or her cell phone to school.

Student Name: _____ Student Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____ Parent Signature: _____

APPENDIX D: Academic Integrity Policy

As a student of St. Stephen School, we uphold the principles of academic integrity and pledge to maintain the highest standards of honesty and ethical conduct in all academic endeavors. We understand the importance of original thought, proper citation, and responsible use of information, and we are committed to avoiding all forms of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaboration with other individuals and/or technology driven platforms.

Cheating involves the unauthorized use of information, materials, devices, sources, or practices in completing academic activities.

Plagiarism is a type of cheating in which someone uses the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own without giving proper credit to the source.

Northern Illinois University. (n.d.). Academic Integrity Tutorials. Retrieved from <https://www.niu.edu/academic-integrity/faculty/types/index.shtml>

In the event of academic dishonesty, the following consequences are in place for **cheating**:

1st Offense:	Discipline referral; Parent contact; Grade of “zero”
2nd Offense:	Discipline referral; Parent contact; Grade of “zero”; Lunch Detention
3rd Offense:	Discipline referral; Parent contact; Grade of “zero”; In school suspension

In the event of academic dishonesty, the following consequences are in place for **plagiarism** (this includes work submitted using any **generative artificial intelligence*** to plagiarize):

**Generative artificial intelligence (AI) describes algorithms (such as ChatGPT, Stable Diffusion, Midj Journey, etc) that can be used to create new content, including audio, code, images, text, simulations, and videos.*

1st Offense:	Discipline referral; Parent contact; Option to re-do assignment at half credit
2nd Offense:	Discipline referral; Parent contact; Grade of “zero”; Lunch detention
3rd Offense:	Discipline referral; Parent contact; Grade of “zero”; In school suspension

St. Stephen School
Handbook Acknowledgement Form
2025-2026

Photo Release

Sharing photos and videos of students' activities and school events is a wonderful way to show school families and our community the interesting activities and fruitful work that happens here at St. Stephen School throughout the year. Images will be shared on social media, included in marketing material, and posted on our website unless a parent opts out. Students are identified by first name only when they earn an award or have a noteworthy accomplishment. To opt out of either photo/video use or having your child's name included for an achievement, you would have filled out a technology acceptable use/media release agreement located in your child's enrollment checklist on the FinalSite portal. We seek to balance the accommodation of photo restrictions while still providing well deserved recognition of other students in a group setting. Therefore, please understand that disallowing your child to be included in school-related photos/videos means they will be politely asked to step aside when a group photo is taken for external use. This includes students involved in band, choir, drama, service projects, academic competitions, field trips, sports, etc. Photo restriction also impedes our ability to share events via live-streaming. This RELEASE supersedes all other documents and online forms.

Student Handbook

By signing below, I agree to all the above policies, procedures and rules as they pertain to myself, my child(ren), my family and any/all guests of mine.

Questions or concerns regarding this handbook should be addressed through the school office.

Parent(s) First and Last Name(s): (please print)

Child(ren) First and Last Name(s) and Grade(s): (please print)

Parent(s) Signature(s):

*A paper copy of this acknowledgement form will be provided to all families.